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October 11, 1991

COMMONWEAL

**DISARMING
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James W. Douglass

**LOOKING INTO
THE NIGHT**
Leonard A. Temme

BOOKS THE TENDER-HEARTED SEX
EDWARD WHEELER on Gerard Manley Hopkins
MICHAEL O. GARVEY
on Richard Rhodes and Andrew Malcolm
Religious Booknotes: **LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM**

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Hitting Home

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**AN EXCHANGE
OF VIEWS**

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ECCLESIA SEMPER REFORMANDA
Margaret O'Brien Steinfels
Thomas A. McCabe



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CORRESPONDENCE

Journey to life

Spokane, Wash.

To the Editors: I extend to the editors and staff of *Commonweal* my deep personal appreciation for the special supplement you prepared [August 9] on Initiative 119, which is currently being presented to the voters in our state of Washington. To borrow from the titles of the articles, much is at stake when a society ponders the possibility of granting doctors license to kill.

The fundamental dialogue will not be over on November 5 with the votes of the citizens of Washington. The technology and trauma of modern medical experience rightly cause individuals to fear dying more than death. As believers we do not morbidly glorify dying, but we journey through death to life. Physician-assisted suicide dehumanizes this most fundamental encounter with life. For government to truncate its responsibility for humanizing society, destroys the very human solidarity from which government receives its mandate. Life autonomy is the human question for the twenty-first century.

(MOST REV.) WILLIAM S. SKYLSTAD
Bishop of Spokane

Not babies but bodies

Bethel Park, Pa.

To the Editors: I have noticed a curious omission in most media coverage of the Operation Rescue [O.R.] activities in Wichita, Kansas: failure to explain why proliferators are peacefully blocking access to Dr. George Tiller's abortion center. Dr. Tiller boasts of "expertise" in doing third-trimester abortions, and says he performs them for any reason on women who have been pregnant for up to 8 1/2 months. If the O.R. people can keep these pregnant women out of the hands of George Tiller for a few more days, childbirth will occur. Thirty-one of these abortion-bound women that we know of have decided to continue their pregnancies.

Dr. Tiller states that he does 600 of these third-trimester abortions a year, or more

than ten each week. Were these children to be born, even in the case of seventh-month abortions, they would have an excellent chance of living outside the womb. But Dr. Tiller delivers not babies but bodies, so many that he faces a problem in dealing with them. For that reason Dr. Tiller has installed an incinerator in his abortion center. The next time you see a newborn baby, imagine that you are seeing a lifeless body about to be disposed of in George Tiller's crematorium.

In trying to prevent irrevocable acts of abortion-violence, O.R. performs an act of kindness to a fellow being: sparing the child in the womb from the irrevocable act of abortion-violence. The movement has always said that the unborn child is fully human, with an inalienable right to life. O.R. acts, albeit undaintily, as if this right were indeed a fact of life.

The Justice Department is right to take issue with Federal Judge Patrick Kelly, who compares O.R.'s nonviolent baby-saving actions with KKK terrorism. The department is both cowardly and wrong to enforce the death warrant, signed by Judge Kelly, that gives Dr. Tiller, or anyone else, freedom to kill children.

I hope that more citizens will begin to acknowledge O.R.'s actions as truly self-sacrificing, penitential works for God's kingdom, acts that are worthy of emulation. Or must we wait until we see death camps set up for old people before more of us wake up to this madness?

ELIZABETH BROUGH

Creed & culture, cont'd

St. Louis, Mo.

To the Editors: Keeping in mind Abigail McCarthy's recent plea for civility in intra-church debates, I nevertheless want to continue the creed and culture controversy that I launched here [Correspondence, April 19]. In writing my letter I had no intention of impugning the missionary work of Father Eugene Hillman, described by Father George Crocenzi [Correspondence, June 1]. I will, however, point out that in

the church's long history of evangelization there seems to have been little awareness of the degradation of women caused by polygamy and the obscene cultural practice of female castration. I've heard little or nothing about attempts by the church to limit these practices.

We Catholic feminists must remind celibate males that we have more sensitivity to the impact on women of subjugation and oppression than they, and we respond accordingly when we read about the continuation of cultural practices that are contrary to the gospel message and Christ's own behavior toward women. It is true, as Father Crocenzi argues, that many American marriages fail, but I suspect any woman would prefer the American model, problem-ridden as it is, to being the fourth wife of an African tribal chief.

In response to the suggestion that all feminists are pro-abortion, I believe, with Mary Luke Tobin, S.L., that we should work to make abortion unthinkable rather than illegal.

CEIL G. REH

In defense of Lustiger

Paris, France

To the Editors: This is in response to the review by Steven Englund of Norman
(Continued on page 590)

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COMMONWEAL



Not before time

“I’m ready to meet my God, any time,” Granny Valvona remarks in Muriel Spark’s novel, *Memento Mori*. To which Granny Barnacle—one of Granny Valvona’s aged compatriots in the Maud Long Medical Ward—stoutly rejoins: “But not before time.” As several recent events signal, that “before time” is increasingly

taking center stage in the public debate over dying:

- Dr. Jack Kevorkian’s Thanatron machine and its effective demonstration in the suicide of Janet Atkins last year in Michigan;

- Washington State’s euthanasia Initiative 119, coming up for a vote November 5 (see *Commonweal*, August 9);

- a Rochester, New York, grand jury’s refusal to indict and the state Health Department’s refusal to discipline Dr. Timothy E. Quill for assisting in the suicide of Diane Trumbull, a cancer patient;

- *Final Exit*, Derek Humphrey’s detailed how-to suicide manual, has become a best seller.

In sum, our society’s efforts to control and stave off death by medical intervention is in danger of evolving into a readiness to assist in bringing it about.

This press to hurry the inevitable is the dark side of medicine’s increasing ability to delay, unnaturally and unnecessarily, the “inevitable.” In too many cases modern medical technologies are simply prolonging dying and heightening a patient’s anxieties as well as those of families and friends. But this is not the only driving force behind the efforts to legitimate euthanasia. Two “new” diseases, AIDS and Alzheimer’s, whose natural trajectory spark the fear of a prolonged and painful dying, raise questions about the meaning of those lives subject to pernicious forms of depersonalization. And then there is the American credo of autonomy and personal independence, a national predilection incisively captured in the title of the recent play, “Whose Life Is It, Anyway?” Thus, *New York Times* columnist Anna Quindlen, having read *Final Exit* out of curiosity, announces to her readers that she is going to save the book and its suicide instruction for the day she may need it. “Whose business is it, really?...” she asks. And, good American that she is, she answers, “...but my own and that of those I love?” (August 14, 1991).

Death, by its nature, is not a shameful thing. It has, as Hans Jonas has noted, its own fitness, its own dignity. So when dying is seen to be shameful, and the dying feel they are, or will be, shunned, we need to ask why. Have we or our society—whether out of fear, or lack of compassion, or the pursuit of technological medical solutions—failed to support others in their agony, to relieve their pain and sense of isolation, to pay them proper attention, to recognize that the dying are still among the living, not the dead?

The dilemma becomes especially acute when those to whom we entrust the care

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of the sick and dying, physicians and nurses, themselves fall prey to the despair of a Trumbull or an Atkins. It is a steadily downward path from there. "If we continue to seek with our present obsessiveness... ever more control over our bodily fate, we can be certain of ever greater despair when we fail to achieve it..." (Daniel Callahan, *What Kind of Life?* Simon & Schuster). Then even the ancient cardinal principle of medicine—Do no harm—will be made to seem archaic and fall to the logic of technologized medicine.

It need not. Medicine, and the mindset that supports its never-ending quest for "a cure," must realize that its own hubris has contributed to the loss of trust among patients and would-be patients—ultimately, all of us. Medicine must both acknowledge and teach us its limits in staving off for a time our natural end, our own mortality. Though it must, like all of us, finally bow to death, medicine must never directly assist our dying.

Here the guidelines of traditional moral theology have much to offer. In the Roman Catholic tradition, human life is considered sacred and inviolable, but it is not considered an absolute. In providing medical treatment for critically ill patients, the choices made must be proportionate to the total well-being of a patient, and the means chosen must be reasonable. "What is morally obligatory depends on what is proportionate and contributes to the patient's total good" (Richard M. Gula, "Principled and Virtuous Care of the Dying: A Catholic Response to Euthanasia," St. Louis: Catholic Health Association).

The Supreme Court, in *Cruzan*, recognized a patient's right to die, a position in keeping with traditional medical and moral ethics. But "letting die" is totally different from euthanasia or state-approved physician aid-in-dying. In the latter case, society is being asked to approve a form of state-sanctioned murder. And those credentialed to protect life are being licensed to take it. Even when the individual feels his or her life no longer has meaning, has been deprived of a sense of autonomy, or should not be held hostage to someone else's definition of life's value, society cannot legitimate assisting or accelerating that individual's premature death. Rather, it must do the opposite: Show care for that individual by lessening his or her suffering to the fullest extent possible.

Human life does not derive its unique value merely from its usefulness—whether to oneself or to others. Each person is unique, never to be repeated. His or her value is incommensurable and inherent. "For a man stamps many coins in one mold and they are alike; but the King who is the king of all kings... stamped every man in the mold of the first man, yet not one of them resembles his fellows," thus a teaching of the Midrash.

Nor is human life merely the possession of the one who bears it. It is an inherited gift, and as such, has meaning not only for oneself but for those who bestowed it, those who have shared it, and those who will follow. Ultimately, of course, it is a gift, willed and sustained by God. Even if the larger meaning of life is no longer readily apparent to me, its bearer, its significance nonetheless remains entwined in the larger skein of human endeavor and divine intention. To rip it out prematurely is to endanger human solidarity by

impairing more than this single strand, cutting it off from the weaver's cloth.

It is because of the interrelated nature of human life—its broader solidarity and spiritual dimension—that human beings have an instinctive interest not just in the maintenance of themselves and the continuation of their immediate families and friends, but in the prospects for human life and the solidarity of the human community. To shield the fragile hope of those who are dying against the despair that can cloud our inescapable mortality is a necessary and ceaseless task, for physicians, for everyone. Though our own understanding of this is rooted in a religious reality, that Christ has triumphed over death, and so shall we, it is an understanding that also has to be nourished in the best and most generous instincts of civil society: Our care for the sick, the vulnerable, the dying is a mark of our deepest character.

ET CETERA

LUBRICATE YOUR LARYNX Now that a precedent has been set, with the change from Lehigh (which was at least pronounceable) back to St. Petersburg, we invite the Soviet peoples, out of concern for our tonsils, to get rid of some other place names, e.g., *Yakutsk*, *Kazakhstan*, *Uzbekistan*, *Borisoglebsk*, *Dneprodzerzhinsky*, etc. From the U.S. they could borrow such sweetly flowing syllables as *Quonochontaug* (R.I.), *Okalochochee* (Fla.), *Tonganoxie* (Kans.), *Chillikodratna* (Alaska). There are other resources elsewhere: Mexico: *Xicohtencat*; Turkey: *Yavsatuzlasi*; Venezuela: *Waukarlycarly*; Wales: *Ystwyth* and *Clwyd*. And surely the people of *Zyudostinskiy* (a Soviet island in the Caspian) would be more comfortable with *Xiachengzi*, which of course is in *Heilongjiang*, which of course is in China.

REPORT ON HISPANIC AMERICA

THE SOUNDS OF SPANGLISH NEITHER CERVANTES NOR SHAKESPEARE

Who speaks Spanish in the United States? Or rather, who speaks what kind of Spanish? Hispanics, who according to the 1990 census total more than 22 million in the U.S. and are the second-fastest growing minority after the Asians and Pacific Islanders, are taking a long time to learn English. Why? There are various explanations, the most important of which is that as a cohesive group, the community is in constant change. Modern Chicanos, or Mexican-

Americans, descendents of the oldest Hispanic families in the U.S., look back to 1848, when in a diplomatic compromise, two-fifths of Mexico was sold by Generalissimo Santa Anna to the White House for \$15 million. In an effort to preserve their historical identity and to battle co-optation and assimilation, Mexican-Americans have remained attached to their tradition. And tradition means language. Their Spanish is a hybrid of Anglo-Saxon and Castilian words and expressions, and structurally their sentences are organized neither according to the language of Shakespeare, nor to that of Cervantes. They can speak English with Anglos, but among themselves they use Spanglish—a middle ground, half a part of the past, half a part of their present and future. There is no way they will adapt to the American way of life one hundred percent: Since they are in constant contact with newly arrived Central-American refugees, memory and daily endeavors will not allow them to abandon their identity.

Obviously, Spanish is going to survive as a language in this country, although not in its Castilian, orthodox form. I often think of Yiddish as a parallel example. For almost two hundred years, educated Jews in Eastern Europe, often referred to as *Masklim*, refused to grant Yiddish the status of a “legitimate” communicative language, although during the eighteenth century thousands of poor shtetl inhabitants used it in their everyday life. Yiddish was part Hebrew, part German, and part a sum of Slovak, Czech, Russian, Polish, and other Indo-European idioms. Only after a forceful and long struggle was the dialect finally elevated to the level of language, and before the Holocaust it was spoken by more than 11 million people. The comparison can be simplistic but it’s also illuminating: Spanish is in the process of revamping its own roots in the United States, and if Hispanics refuse to give it up, as they have in the past, the result may be a perplexing mixture that belongs nowhere and is the product of an almost Darwinist evolutionary selection.

Those who walk in the streets of Miami, Los Angeles, or New York and have a sense of things Hispanic, know that there is no one Spanish in North America but many—at least four: that used by Puerto Ricans, by Chicanos, by Cubans, and by that other group commonly known as “other,” made up of Central Americans (mainly Nicaraguans and Salvadorans), South Americans, Spaniards, and people from other corners of the Hispanic map. Although all of these four groups share a common cultural heritage and utilize the same grammar and syntax, the various idioms—or I should say, quasi-dialects—they use daily often make for hilarious misunderstandings.

In the early eighties, for instance, when the Hispanic consumer began to be taken seriously by major marketing corporations, an insecticide company decided to launch a product on Spanish-speaking television and radio. They hired an advertising agent with little expertise and an incomplete knowledge of the Hispanic linguistic idiosyncrasies. The result was a commercial that stated that the product was infallible in killing *bichos*. The ad went on the air and of course almost a third of the audience roared with laughter every time they saw or listened to it. The word, you should know, means bug or insect in Mexico City, but in San Juan it is used to refer to the penis.

Just as a British commercial would have to be reshaped in

order to be used in the United States, words within the Hispanic community in this country depend on the various contexts. Of course a common understanding can be found, yet communication is not just the art of imparting, conveying, and exchanging ideas and information, but also of knowing how to do so. The only way to distinguish between one linguistic Spanish-speaking group and another is through its unique national past.

Among the Hispanics, Cubans are the most educated and affluent group. A substantial number escaped Fidel Castro’s revolution in the sixties, and a second wave, this one made up of members of lower-income and less cosmopolitan social strata, fled to Florida in 1980. The sophisticated Cubans are proud of their baroque literature (written by authors like Jose Lezama Lima, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, and Alejo Carpentier), and although the younger generation is fluent in English, they keep their Spanish because many swear they will return to Havana when the Communist regime falls apart. Of course that may never happen, but like the two-thousand-year-old stubbornness of the diaspora Jews who pray for a better life in “Jerusalem next year,” it is an expression of the Cuban sense of the transitory present.

Puerto Ricans, on the other hand, have come to New York and other cities on the East Coast in search of better economic well-being. Their home island has been a commonwealth of the U.S. since 1898. Only last spring, after a heated political debate, Puerto Rico’s governor proclaimed Spanish the commonwealth’s language—hence defying total annexation to the

Ernest Kroll **Air Quality Index**

Westerlies
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so wafted
pine past brine
that Peter
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wilderness.

United States. Puerto Ricans are the lowest on the economic scale within the Hispanic minority as a whole, even below the Central Americans, who have sought asylum during the eighties in the Southern United States and have just begun to adapt linguistically.

The vocabulary used by these four groups depends on the particular historical circumstance. Argentinians, for instance, are less the product of the interracial mixture between the Spanish conquistadores and the native Indians, and therefore have a more Europeanized Spanish than that of, say, Mexicans, who have integrated pre-Columbian terms and names (Aztec, Mayan, etc.) into their day-to-day communication. In general, Hispanics in Chicago or Los Angeles, or New Jersey, don't say "*mercado*" anymore for supermarket, but "*marketa*"; they don't say "*voy a estacionar el autotmovil*" but "*voy a parkear el automovil*"; "*aplicar a la universidad*" instead of "*solicitar entrada a la universidad*." Curiously, because of the money and attention placed on Hispanic media in this country, people in Caracas, Venezuela, or Santiago, Chile, who watch Hispanic television from the U.S. on cable channels are beginning to use the same malapropisms, transforming the Spanish language in their own individual countries. Thus, the changes here have a strong echo all over the world.

Some months ago I attended a conference at the University of Southern California. The topic was "Spanish and the Media in the United States." There were linguists invited as well as advertising agents, journalists, writers, educators, editors, and independent scholars, all professionals from the various fields that shape the language daily. We debated the situation of Spanish in this country, and some showed signs of distress after realizing how "sick" it really is. All the participants had different origins (Peruvians, Guatemalans, Spanish-speaking gringos, Mexicans, Uruguayans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Iberians, etc.). Interestingly,

the panelists had to refrain from using neologisms—and for that, were often ridiculed. It was a revealing symptom: It showed how Spanish-speaking media workers, although conscious of their social and educational role, don't speak an unaffected language. They are part of the "sickness" they are looking to cure.

Being a novelist and a scholar, I talked about the difficult art of being a Hispanic author and writing fiction in the U.S. Many of my colleagues, like Oscar Hijuelos, the author of the 1990 Pulitzer Prize winner *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*, or Felipe Alfau, who was nominated for the 1990 National Book Award for *Chromos*, have chosen to switch to English; for one thing, their audience is wider and their endeavors can be remunerated more handsomely. Hence, they belong to that new branch of Hispanic literature whose authors must be translated into Spanish to be read in Barcelona, Mexico City, or Buenos Aires. But others, although admirers of Joseph Conrad and Vladimir Nabokov, cannot write fiction—only criticism—in anything but their mother tongue, although they recognize that the mere term, "mother tongue," is indeed problematic. The truth is that if a writer wanted to effectively reproduce the street language spoken in Los Angeles or New York City, the choice would be neither Spanish nor English, and no trade publisher would take the risk of publishing their craft in the amorphous jargon called Spanglish. Not yet, at least.

The story of Spanish is the story of its various pasts but also of its intriguing futures. And one of those futures, I think, is being shaped right now around us. The result might be an affront to Quevedo and Borges, a bastardized yet authentic version of the same language of Columbus—who by the way, didn't know how to write and spoke a terrible Spanish. ILAN STAVANS

Ilan Stavans, a Mexican novelist and critic, is the editor of the forthcoming Tropical Synagogues: An Anthology of Jewish-Latin American Short Stories (Holmes and Meier).

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

HITTING HOME

CAN THE CHURCH HELP?

In August, diocesan papers ran a column by Dolores Curran, a Catholic writer whose column is syndicated nationwide. In our local paper it was entitled "Real Issues of Women." In the article, Curran wrote of the widespread and increasing violence against women and of the equally widespread abuse and neglect of children. She took the church in America to task for its failure to use its teaching power to preach the sinfulness of this violence. She

is right about this failure; it is a glaring omission. When, if ever, have you heard a homily inveighing against wife or child beating?

Curran cited one chilling example of what might have happened if you had. A priest of her acquaintance was a diocesan family-life director who offered workshops in family life and marriage. As a result of confidential surveys he initiated, he discovered to his surprise that two of the greatest needs listed by respondents were help

with alcoholic spouses and their abuse. He changed his emphasis. "He began by educating the priests in his diocese to the extent of the problem, encouraging them to preach on the sinfulness of alcoholism, abuse, and incest, and offering parish-based support groups....His priests reported that men were telling them to lay off, that these were nonreligious topics, and that if they continued, they would withdraw financial support." What does this mean? Does the Catholic male claim the right to abuse women and children without interference from his church? Apparently, in at least one of our dioceses, he does.

Nevertheless, Curran evidently believes that these hostile males can and should be educated by the church out of their predilection for violence. If it is possible it means that the church will be at odds with the prevailing American culture.

Social philosopher Myriam Medzian, interviewed recently in *Time* (September 16, 1991), points out that young people in this country are surrounded by a culture of violence. "By the time American kids are eighteen years old they have watched 26,000 murders on television alone. Heavy metal and rap lyrics encourage rape and bigotry. It is contrary to common sense and research to think that you can create such a culture and not have any effects."

Medzian believes that masculinity and violence are linked in our country: "Eighty-nine percent of the violent crimes in the U.S. are committed by males." She sees this linkage as strengthened by the way sports for the young emphasize competition and winning at any cost. Boys are often "taught to 'take out' players from the opposing team. Taking out a player means injuring a player so badly that he can no longer play." She points out that studies have shown that boys who are involved in competitive sports show less sportsmanship and fair play than those who do not participate in such sports. In addition to learning to win at any cost, they become "enormously concerned" with dominance and conquering. They carry these attitudes—learned attitudes in her opinion—over into the outside world and into their relations with women. "It is not at all surprising," she notes, "that approximately one-third of the sexual assaults on college campuses are by athletes."

It is particularly disturbing that the most glaring incidents of the most ugly form of sexual assault by athletes—gang rape—have allegedly occurred on Catholic campuses, at St. John's University in New York and at Notre Dame. In both cases there seems to have been little or no religious enculturation strong enough to deter these young men from this violence, a violence shamefully experienced as fun.

Medzian believes that the alarming violence in our culture can be reduced by education and regulation. "You have to rede-

fine masculinity. You have to begin to encourage boys from the youngest age to be empathetic...to tell them they can be nurturing and masculine at the same time." She cites the success of conflict-resolution programs in schools: for many boys who go through such programs, violence goes from being a first reaction to a last resort. In addition to education she urges the regulation of films of violence and the selling of toys like guns that inspire games of violence.

But there are those who believe that violence is innate in the male character. A public defender once said to me that if all males between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five could be locked away, society would

be relatively crime free. "By and large, throughout the entire animal kingdom...conspicuous or expressed adversitiveness is a larger element in the lives of males than females," writes Walter Ong in *Fighting for Life* (Cornell University Press, 1981). A scientist recently told me that in certain forms of animal life, "guards" will protect males attacking a female.

Whatever the reason, the drive to violence and dominance—aimed as it is at females and the weak—must be reckoned with and controlled. We know from human history that it can be. But it is apparently a much larger, more complicated task than Dolores Curran's family-life director envisioned. It is still a task for the church.

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

BIGOTS & BLUSTER

IS THERE AN ANTI-CATHOLIC PROBLEM?

Earlier this year I took issue with a Catholic bishop who criticized a newspaper for being anti-Catholic (*Commonweal*, June 1). He was offended by an editorial cartoon that twitted Catholic bishops for being prochoice on schools and antichoice on abortion. I suggested that the bishop was overreacting; that the cartoon fell within the boundaries of fair play; and that in America today there are far too many people who refuse to debate their critics—who instead try to stifle criticism by charging their opponents with bigotry. I said that I hoped Catholics would not pick up this illiberal virus.

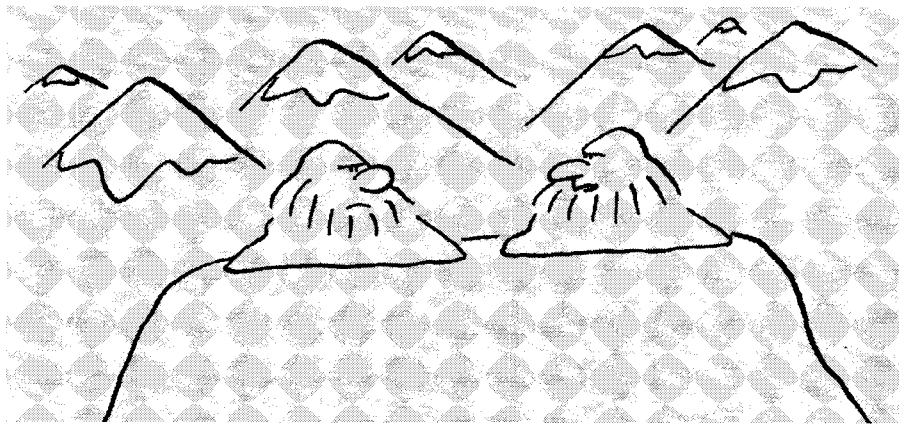
On September 9 of this year the *Los Angeles Times* ran a story headlined, "Under Fire?" with the sub-head: "Is anti-Catholic sentiment increasing? Some say yes and declare they're not going to take it anymore."

The article quotes a number of prominent Catholics who believe anti-Catholicism is a significant problem in the United States today: former secretary of education and drug czar, William Bennett; ABC-TV correspondent Cokie Roberts; and novelist-

sociologist, Father Andrew Greeley. Los Angeles Cardinal Roger M. Mahony is quoted as describing "Stop the Church"—a controversial TV documentary that shows the gay rights group Act-up disrupting Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City—as the "most blatantly" anti-Catholic film he has ever seen. The cardinal urges Southern Californians to consider withholding contributions to KCET-TV, the Los Angeles PBS station that aired the documentary.

The *Times* article cites a number of organizations that are convinced of the danger of anti-Catholic bigotry: the Center for Media and Public Affairs, which released a study last April concluding that there is significant anti-Catholic bias in the media; the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, which believes anti-Catholic incidents are growing more numerous; and a newly formed group called The Catholic Campaign for America, which announces that it has had "enough of Catholic bashing." (The leadership of the Catholic Campaign includes Bennett, Pat Buchanan, William Simon, Hugh Carey, Rep. Robert Dornan, Bowie Kuhn, the





*"If you can't meditate something nice about someone,
don't meditate anything at all!"*

Reverend Richard Neuhaus, Cardinal John O'Connor, and Thomas Monaghan of Domino's Pizza.)

Near its conclusion the otherwise alarming article momentarily changes direction, saying, "Some Catholics caution against hypersensitivity"—but the only person cited is yours truly, as my June 1 *Commonweal* article is briefly quoted.

What am I among so many? I don't mind disagreeing with Robert Dornan and Pat Buchanan, even William Bennett. But Bowie Kuhn? It looks as if I am badly outnumbered in my belief that anti-Catholicism is not a significant problem in America today.

In discussing this topic it is helpful to keep a few distinctions in mind.

1. *Prejudice vs. discrimination.* Prejudice has to do with feelings and attitudes, discrimination with overt action. Thus prejudice is insulting (at least when the prejudiced person is so indiscreet as to reveal his or her feelings), while discrimination is not only insulting but injurious as well. If there is a certain amount of prejudice against Catholics, well, that's too bad; but as long as it does not show signs of passing over into discrimination, it is nothing to get overly anxious about.

If someone objects that by this logic there is also no need to be anxious about anti-Semitic or anti-black feeling, I disagree. These forms of prejudice are far more dangerous than anti-Catholicism, since the historical record indicates that they are far more likely to pass over into discrimination of a virulent and even violent sort. If America were Northern Ireland,

then anti-Catholic feeling would be a menace; as it is, it is only a sign of boorishness.

2. *Personal vs. institutional anti-Catholicism.* It is one thing to dislike Catholics as a class. This is the prejudice I just referred to: deplorable but not particularly worrisome. It is quite something else to be hostile to Catholicism as an institution. The Catholic church stands for, among other things, certain beliefs and a certain moral code. If you disapprove of those beliefs or that code—if, for example, you regard as pernicious the belief in papal infallibility or the ban on abortion—you are under no obligation to have a good opinion of the institution which stands for those things. Perhaps your disapproval is an error; and if your error is one you fell into without sufficient rational reflection, we can call it a prejudice. But your views are certainly well within the bounds of legitimate dissent in a pluralistic society. Catholics can call you a heretic or an infidel, if they like (and if such language had not gone out of fashion). But no one has the right to call you a bigot.

3. *Anti-Catholic vs. antireligion.* Those conservative Protestants who complain that there is a very influential "religion" of secular humanism in America are basically correct. If it is not, strictly speaking, a religion, it is certainly analogous to one. It is a worldview hostile to supernaturalistic religion in general, hence to Catholicism; but it is usually no more hostile to Catholicism than to other religions; indeed, if anything, it is somewhat less hostile to Catholicism than to fundamentalist Protestantism.

Since secular humanists are on average

better educated and of higher social class than the typical American, they tend to take their own intellectual superiority for granted; that is, they tend to be a bit snobbish; which leads them to reject the religion of their social inferiors without giving it careful examination: after all, those destined to become secular humanists had come to understand everything anyone needs to know about religion at the advanced age of seventeen or eighteen. All this may give the impression of prejudice. And in a sense it is prejudice. But it is the kind of prejudice offensive to the ideal of rational open-mindedness, not the kind dangerous to the American ideal of pluralistic tolerance.

Keeping these distinctions in mind, I would draw the following conclusions: (a) that there is a fair amount of anti-religion sentiment in the U.S., mostly among secular humanists; (b) that little of this sentiment is specifically anti-Catholic; (c) that such anti-Catholic sentiment as there is gets directed mainly at the church as an institution rather than at Catholics as individuals; (d) that prejudice against Catholics as individuals is more boorish than dangerous; and (e) that outright anti-Catholic discrimination is still exceedingly rare.

Patriotism, said Dr. Johnson, is the last refuge of a scoundrel. In America today the accusation of bigotry is all too often the first refuge of those who would rather not debate the positions they hold. Thus those who criticize the government of Israel are in danger of being called anti-Semitic; those who question affirmative action are in danger of being called racist; those who condemn abortion are in danger of being called sexist; and those who express doubts about the moral rightness of homosexual conduct are in danger of being called homophobic.

When I say this, of course, I do not mean to suggest that there is no such thing as bigotry in the world. Nor did Dr. Johnson mean there was no patriotism in England. But there is also such a thing as an honest difference of opinion, and the critic should always be presumed innocent of bigotry until proven guilty.

My earnest prayer is that Catholics not jump on board this phony and already overcrowded "anti-bigotry" bandwagon, which is one of the most illiberal developments on the American scene today. □

DISARMING AUSTIN FAGOTHEY

DEBATING TOTAL WAR AT VATICAN II

JAMES W. DOUGLASS

Like all of Jesus' parables, the parable of the leaven is about the kingdom of God and what it is like. The kingdom was a symbol Jesus used to describe the breaking through of Love in history. This breaking-in of the kingdom is nothing that we can reasonably expect, though we can hope for it. But Jesus suggests that the kingdom's shattering breakthrough into our lives may in fact be nothing that we want.

How does one tell a story of transformation? Jesus did it simply in his parable of the leaven: "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened" (Luke 13:20-21).

To those who heard Jesus' parable, leaven was a figure for moral corruption. In Exodus (12:19), leaven symbolized the unholy. It was banned during the holy season of Passover. For Paul, a little of the old leaven would morally corrupt the whole (Galatians 5:9; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8). Jesus' parable assumes this identification of leaven with moral corruption. It also assumes we know that three measures are an immense quantity of flour, enough to make a meal for over one hundred people. Jesus' parable is subversive. It tells us that a tiny corrupt substance, hidden in the flour by a woman, accomplished an unseen, massive transformation. Like the kingdom of God.

I have a parable of transformation. It is about a series of events which occurred in Rome, at the periphery of Vatican Council II (1962-65), while the bishops of the Catholic church struggled with the question of nuclear war. The story begins, however, not in Rome but five years earlier in New York and California. It begins with a leaven—Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement—which an English professor hid in the lives of his students.

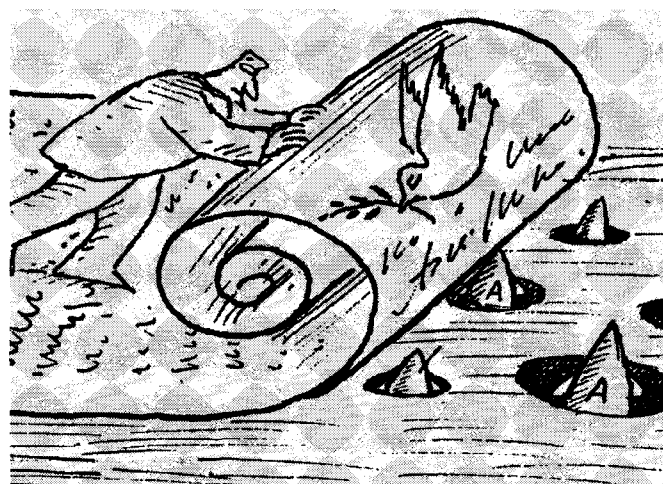
The introduction of the leaven in my life took place, unknown to Dorothy Day, in a classroom at Santa Clara University in 1957. Dorothy had become a "leaven" for the nation in New York City by remaining in a park with twenty-eight friends while

millions of other New Yorkers took shelter in basements and subways from a hypothetical hydrogen bomb attack during a compulsory civil defense drill. The twenty-nine people in the park were, as in Jesus' parable, a tiny, corrupt substance in the consciousness of the nation. They also accomplished a massive transformation, growing in number and stopping the annual civil defense drill in several short years.

For her particular act of noncooperation with nuclear war, Dorothy Day went to jail. *Commonweal* published an article on why she did so [July 26, 1957]. I read the article at Santa Clara because my English professor, Herbert Burke, had passed it out to our class. I recall Dr. Burke leaning back against the blackboard, a question mark of a professor, observing us over his glasses as we finished reading the article.

He soon learned that the leaven had been uniformly rejected. All of his students thought Dorothy Day was crazy. We suspected that our slyly questioning professor thought differently, as he re-introduced the leaven in Socratic fashion into our lives.

Looking back now, three decades later, I remember that spring at Santa Clara as one long meditation on Dorothy Day, her friends in the park, and the world's threatened destruction by nuclear war. I began reading Dorothy Day's newspaper, the *Catholic Worker*. There I discovered that resisting nuclear war preparations was for the Catholic Worker movement all of a piece with feeding



JAMES W. DOUGLASS is the author of, among other works, *Lightning East to West: Jesus, Gandhi and the Nuclear Age* (*Crossroad*). This article is adapted from his forthcoming *The Nonviolent Coming of God* (*Orbis*).

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the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and resisting every kind of injustice. All of it was building a new society, the kingdom of God, within the shell of the old society. Jesus' vision of God's kingdom was why Dorothy Day had gone to the park and to jail. My thoughts took a new direction: How could one believe in the kingdom of God and not respond to the threat of the world's destruction?

But the leaven in my story is not only Dorothy Day. It is also a philosopher of nuclear war, my Santa Clara ethics professor, Father Austin Fagothey, S.J. In a sense, Fagothey was truer to Jesus' parable of the leaven than Day was. By converting me to her vision, Dorothy had become a holy burr in my conscience, prickly but saintly. Father Fagothey's thinking on nuclear war was, on the other hand, a blasphemy. It was alien, unholy, transforming—a true leaven. Nuclear war was my enemy, and Fagothey, as my ethics professor, justified it with a serene logic. By teaching me skillfully an idea I hated (and still do), Fagothey provoked me into thinking it through. Is the kingdom of God my enemy's truth?

Father Fagothey taught courses in ethics and the history of philosophy. He was a small man in his late fifties, with the mental ability to abstract the essence of every philosopher in history and set them all down in a series of propositions our class could remember. The history of philosophy was a marvelous march of Fagothey's diagrams and propositions across our blackboard. Beside the power of abstraction, Fagothey had a knack for comic relief. In the middle of a lecture, he would sometimes pause with intensity and cross his eyes at the class. He also had a photographic memory. He took roll at the start of each class by scanning the rows of students, jotting down the names he carried in his head that corresponded to the vacant seats. His mind seemed to have the world under control.

It was in his ethics course that we came into conflict. The course was based on *Right and Reason*, the ethics textbook Fagothey had written which was used at many Catholic universities. In light of the just-war doctrine formulated by Augustine and Aquinas, Fagothey had, in *Right and Reason*, begun to develop a concept of total war which would justify the massive use of nuclear weapons. It rested (and, I thought, untenably) on the assumption of an enemy nation so militarizing its society that it would lose "all right to a distinction between military and nonmilitary objectives." Fagothey's language was cautious and clinical, but what it aroused in my mind, thanks to Dorothy Day, was the vision of a total evil chosen by ourselves: the death and suffering of entire societies, if not of the world. Fagothey and I were destined to spend years of our lives struggling on opposite sides of his concept of a just total war, an idea he would develop at length as a revision of traditional moral restraints upon war.

Pushed on different levels by Dorothy Day and Austin Fagothey, I wrote an article for the *Catholic Worker* and the university's literary magazine, using the just-war conditions Fagothey had helped me understand, to make a case for nuclear pacifism. Fagothey responded with a critique of my article, which also appeared in the literary magazine. Perhaps pushed further by my continuing criticisms, he developed his just-nuclear-war position in a public lecture at Santa Clara. I raised critical ques-

tions from the audience. Our extended debate ceased when I graduated. Thanks to the fellowships Fagothey had recommended me for, I moved on to graduate school. We parted as friends in conflict. I had come to respect him deeply but rejected with all my heart and mind his thinking on nuclear war.

After two years of graduate studies, I moved to Rome to study the theology of war and peace at the Gregorian University, one of the oldest Catholic institutions in the world. My family and I arrived in Rome in September 1962, at the same time as 2,300 bishops from all over the world for the opening of Vatican Council II, which would eventually take up the same question as my focus of study.

One day between classes at the Gregorian I was startled to run into Austin Fagothey. What, I asked, was he doing there? Fagothey explained that he had come to Rome at a late stage in his career to get a doctorate in theology. (He already had one in philosophy.) My friend looked at me with the ever-present gleam in his eye. He would be doing his dissertation, he said, on a topic that would interest me: the justification of total nuclear war in Catholic teaching.

I was stunned. All I could say was, would he share his research with me? Fagothey said he would be glad to.

What I began to understand through his developing dissertation was that Fagothey had a piece of the truth. He had been honest enough to recognize that a limited nuclear war was a contradiction in terms. Yet it was precisely this abstraction of a strictly limited nuclear war that the U.S. Catholic church's foremost ethicist, John Courtney Murray, S.J., had used to justify nuclear weapons during the Kennedy era. The argument for limited nuclear war, as made on strategic grounds by Henry Kissinger, was also taken up and developed by Defense Secretary Robert McNamara into a "surgical strike" (first strike) doctrine which each subsequent administration has further refined.

But Fagothey looked at Murray's "limited nuclear war" and rejected it. The idea was fantasy. Yet since, like Murray, he could see no alternative to a Communist takeover except nuclear deterrence, Fagothey decided, in his logical fashion, to justify total nuclear war.

The case he argued at the Gregorian was made possible by the vacuum left by the ambiguities of papal statements on modern war. Fagothey thought no pope or church council had ever been definitive enough in statements against total war to rule out its admissibility in Catholic teaching. Thus he could introduce total war in its ultimate, nuclear form as a reality he thought implicit in the just-war doctrine. Fagothey's dissertation adviser approved his proposal.

What alarmed me most about Fagothey's new project in Rome was that he was no longer presenting his case to Santa Clara students. Now his audience was the most prestigious Catholic theological faculty in the world, one which the Vatican drew upon for its teaching. To sacrifice the distinction between combatants and civilians to a total war necessity, as Fagothey proposed doing, was to break through the just-war doctrine's (and the church's) strongest ethical barrier to nuclear war. Fagothey had

the mind and credentials for such a project. Now he also had the situation in Rome where he could effectively change the Catholic church's teaching on war to the point of sanctioning the destruction of humanity. I thought my friend had become one of the most dangerous people on earth.

After a year's work at the Gregorian, Fagothey returned to Santa Clara to finish writing his dissertation, which he then hoped to have published in the United States—another chilling thought in terms of its possible consequences.

Helped by Austin Fagothey's insights into the contradictions and ambiguities of Catholic thought on war, I committed my life in Rome for the duration of the council to a project opposite to his: a lobbying effort to encourage the world's bishops to make that definitive Catholic condemnation of total war that Fagothey had perceived was lacking.

The next two years in Rome, 1963-65, were filled with grace. A series of extraordinary pilgrims created the "peace lobby" at Vatican II: among them Eileen Egan, Jean and Hildegard Goss-Mayr, Gordon Zahn, Dick Carbray, Thomas Merton (in his correspondence with bishops), Daniel Berrigan, William J. Nagle, Lanza del Vasto, Hermene and Joe Evans, and Dorothy Day herself. Dorothy came twice to Rome, once on a pilgrimage to Pope John XXIII and again in the final session of the council to fast with other women as a personal appeal to the bishops for a strong statement on war and peace.

The ten-day fast of the twenty women in Rome in October 1965 was, I believe, the most profoundly transforming leaven of the final session of Vatican II, when the bishops concluded their deliberations on war and peace. The women's fast, and Dorothy Day's in particular, went to the heart of the total war question: the hunger of the world's destitute beneath the waste and terror of the arms race. Dorothy wrote: "I had offered my fast in part for the victims of famine all over the world, and it seemed to me that I had very special pains...[they] seemed to reach into my very bones, and I could only feel that I had been given some little intimation of the hunger of the world."

Moved again by Dorothy Day and Austin Fagothey, but now with the unique situation of living in Rome, in 1963-65 I spoke with every bishop who would listen to a young lay theology student obsessed with the idea that the council must condemn total war and support the right of conscientious objection. I circulated a document to that effect, influenced by the counter-insights of an old professor of mine. Several bishops used it as a basis for their speeches at the council, urging that the church take a clear stand against total war.

In December 1965, nearing its conclusion, Vatican II issued the only condemnation during its four sessions on any subject, a definitive condemnation of total war. "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and humanity itself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation" (*Gaudium et spes*, promulgated December 7, 1965).

Twenty-two years later, in the fall of 1987, I spent a morning

at the archives of the Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California, reading the letters and papers of Austin Fagothey, who had died in 1975. In the span of years between the Vatican Council's declaration and Father Fagothey's death, we had seen each other on only one occasion, at the scene of our old debates, when I had been invited back to Santa Clara to give a talk on nonviolence. We sat next to each other at dinner, but with the press of conversation from other friends, had little opportunity to talk together. I did ask Fagothey what had become of his dissertation. He said only that he had not been able to complete the project.

Reading through his correspondence with his dissertation adviser twelve years after Fagothey's death, I could see the frustrations of an extraordinary mind confronted by the changing tide of the church's teaching on war and peace. The adviser finally told Fagothey to forget the idea of ever having his dissertation on total war approved for a doctorate in theology at the Gregorian University. He suggested instead using his material for a book and trying to find a publisher in the U.S.

Other letters revealed that Fagothey's proposal for such a book was seriously considered for several months by a leading U.S. Catholic publisher. The editor finally wrote back a rejection in the fall of 1965, explaining that between the completion of Fagothey's research and the present time, "there have been some notable shifts in the thinking of the church on almost every level on the moral implications of total war."

Reading that sentence, I thought first of Pope John XXIII's encyclical, *Pacem in terris*, the most revolutionary source of change, a leaven coming from the papacy itself. I thought, too, of the man who wrote the letter rejecting Fagothey's book, Philip Scharper, then editor of Sheed and Ward, and soon to be a founder of Orbis Books. Before his death in 1984, Scharper was instrumental in bringing a wave of liberation theology to the United States, another "notable shift in the thinking of the church." Scharper had also been one of the pilgrims among the "peace lobby" in Rome, helping to create the council's condemnation of total war and its support of conscientious objection.

And for the rest of that day, and on many days since then, I have thought of Austin Fagothey, who had spent many of his days arguing a counter-position to those changes...and thereby helped create them. Through the "clarification of thought" he brought about in the peace lobby, as Dorothy Day liked to say of illuminating conflicts, Father Fagothey had been a leaven in the leaven. Fagothey pursued a truth that I believed profoundly wrong in the effect it might have upon the world. I thought it a profound corruption of theology and ethics, a leaven which could further corrupt the church, society, and the world. He thought the truth I was pursuing was equally misguided in its implications for humanity. Thus we struggled. But in spite of our blindness to the redemptive dimensions of the other's truth, God had introduced another factor between us: friendship and respect. As we struggled, the apparently conflicting truths deepened and in a more unified way reached the lives of others.

In the course of writing this story, I have continued to debate internally with Father Fagothey. He is still my teacher, friend, and opponent—still the leaven. □

LOOKING INTO THE NIGHT

A NAVY SCIENTIST TAKES STOCK

LEONARD A. TEMME

There is nothing so evil that it cannot be a source of good, and nothing so good that it can't be a source of evil. Sometimes living is like making our way through a garden stepping on daisies to avoid the roses.

It is now evening, and I am in a room at the Visitors' and Officers' Quarters of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio. I spent this afternoon in a meeting of the Tri-Service Working Group on Vision: eighteen scientists, half military, half civilian (I am a civilian). All of us are employed by the Department of Defense (DOD). Twelve represent the Air Force (they can join the meeting just by walking down the hall). Five are with the Army, and one (myself) with the Navy; I flew in last night from home, Pensacola, Florida. There is one oriental, one woman; the rest of us are white males.

Our common work is vision research. The purpose of the meeting, which continues tomorrow, is for us to describe to one another the research we and our institutions are doing on heads-up displays, helmet-mounted displays, night vision goggles (NVGs), and similar electro-optical devices. The intention is for us to coordinate our work, reduce useless redundancy (not all redundancy is useless, corroboration and replication are necessary), and collaborate where useful.

I started working for the DOD in 1985 and have always been particularly sensitive to the morality of what I have been doing. So far, all the work I've done, if it had any practical application, has been as relevant to the civilian sector as to the military. Frankly, for the most part, most of my work has been innocuous, maybe even useless. Now I am collaborating on a new research program designed to enhance the use of night vision goggles for naval aviators. I have a set of NVGs sitting on my desk in my lab in Pensacola.

Today's meeting was a familiar experience: a gathering of scientists talking about theoretical issues. We could have been discussing any number of vision-related research areas: computer graphics, ophthalmology, x-ray interpretation, artificial intelligence. In fact, one or another of us has worked in these fields.

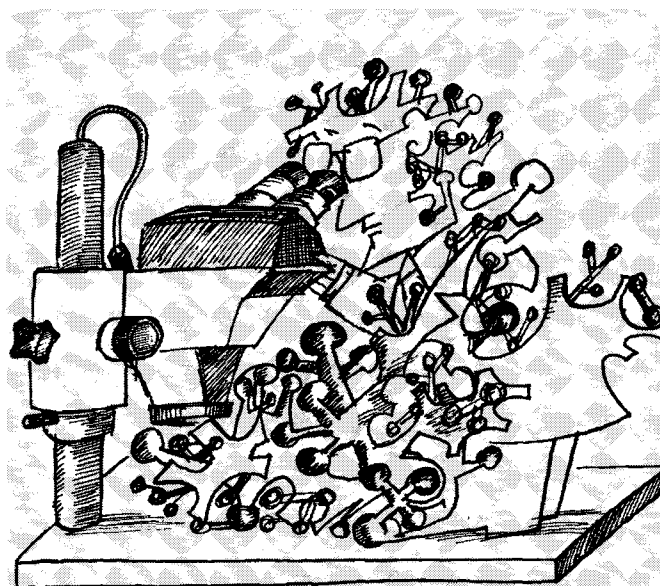
But there are two important things to note about what is going on here. First, it is extremely civilized, sophisticated, and, in

the best sense of the word, collegial. The participants exchange information in a professional fashion in no way different from the model followed in a well-funded university or other research institution. You could almost say that this is science at its best; the free sharing of information and ideas among colleagues with a common interest. I was not aware of anyone who was out to impress, or who was false or arrogant.

The other thing to note was the complete absence of any mention that we were, in fact, discussing weapon systems. There were remarks noting that the machines are dangerous, that error is often fatal, that human life is in jeopardy, that the overriding purpose of the research is to minimize danger. Well, hell, that is a noble goal.

As it happens, however, this meeting follows on the heels of another one, held last week in Phoenix, Arizona, and that has made all the difference. Even though I saw in Phoenix many of these same colleagues now gathered in Dayton, the experience was radically other, and its effects linger.

Last week's five-day meeting was the sixth annual DOD "Conference on Night Vision Devices," a gathering I had never attended before. It was subtitled "The Gulf War: Lessons Learned"; many of the 400 people there had actually participated



LEONARD A. TEMME is a research physiologist for the United States Navy. His published poetry includes two works which appeared in *Commonweal* October 9, 1990 and April 5, 1991.

in Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

The fundamental lesson of the war, which even I was aware of before the meeting opened, was that it was because of our night vision capabilities that we won so decisively. Several times at the Phoenix conference the lesson was capsulized: "We owned the night." Because of NVGs and something called FLIR (Forward Looking Infra-Red), we were able to function at night as easily and effectively as during the day.

Suddenly, because of "The Gulf War: Lessons Learned," the nice academic-like meeting going on here today and tomorrow carries a heavier moral load. During "Lessons Learned" I was treated to a number of video tapes made during actual combat. I'm sure that most or all of them were available to the news media (there was nothing discussed at the conference that was classified). These videos were used to demonstrate night operations, and to illustrate various problems associated with the use of FLIR and NVGs.

Some of these videos included footage of the initial attacks on the enemy's air defense systems. These attacks were not easy; there was risk involved, danger, the unknown. It was not shooting fish in a barrel; those who took part chose courageously and nobly to risk their lives. (I believe strongly that we should acknowledge nobility of motivation when it likely has been a factor, even if one disagrees with the behavior itself; we should be able to recognize courage and honor when they are present.)

One tape of a night attack was presented with a sound track—some kind of rock music I did not recognize but which fit the action perfectly. Rock music, I found myself thinking, has become the music of war; a reflection, perhaps, not on rock music itself but on the general tone of our popular culture and our society. When I first heard the music I was shocked and debated with myself whether to leave as a form of protest, and wondered what kind of statement such a protest would make. But I stayed.

Even with the music, what we watched could be seen as rather tame entertainment, nothing like so grisly as *Die Hard* or *The Terminator*. A narrator speaking above the music described what we were seeing; he made a few flip comments about weapons paying their respects to Saddam. After the first target was hit we saw some shadows moving on the screen, little dark spots. The narrator told us the shadows were people, and he may have said something lighthearted about "getting the hell out of Dodge." Anyway, as the shadowy figures scattered, a sizable proportion of the audience laughed. When the video showed the second missile fired to the second target I tried to pick out a shadow and follow it, but because of the nature of the technology these video images fade, all the definition washes out, the screen goes white.

Understand, in the room were many people who had risked their lives in this conflict. I had not done that. The way they talk about the Iraqis and Saddam is different from the way I talk, and understandably so. Gallows humor—e.g., the jokes medical students make about death and body parts—is a way of dealing with the stress caused by one's sensitivity to the (unavoidable?) terror of the situation. Who can judge the maybe 15 to 30 percent of the audience who laughed? Who can say

why they laughed? What we saw on screen last week was visually indistinguishable from low-budget slapstick comedy—rather like watching the Three Stooges scatter after finding they had set a house on fire. Because of the auditorium, the music, the style of presentation, the distinction was lost for many people. But tomorrow I will be presenting to the group of DOD scientists, my colleagues, my beginning work on NVGs, the device that enabled us to "own the night."

Nothing is so bad or so good. During the last day of the "Lessons Learned" meeting last week, the Coast Guard presented films depicting their experiences with NVGs. We saw tapes, made with NVGs, that had been used in court in trials of cases involving drug interdiction off the coast of Florida. Other tapes recorded surveillance of waste dumping in the Gulf of Mexico and work to control poaching in wildlife refuges. These uses of NVGs seem to me as socially redemptive as one is likely to find. Again, the individuals working for the Coast Guard in some of these assignments are heroes; they risk their lives.

Nothing is ever so good or so bad. The "Lessons Learned" meeting occurred in one of the most elaborate resorts I have ever visited. It was a large complex with several types of hotels, cabanas, restaurants, bars, pools, each facility designed with a different architectural theme. Tasteful music was quietly piped in through speakers hidden in lavish vegetation. It was elegant.

On my last night there I went for a walk through the grounds and stumbled into a meeting of about two hundred people. The sign outside the door said something about a family reunion. I was impressed that there were so many people in one family and poked my head into the room to see what was going on.

The meeting was just ending. The master of ceremonies asked everyone to stand and join hands for a closing prayer. I felt somewhat relieved and blessed. I particularly enjoy adventitious prayer.

The M.C. went into a long prayer/speech with a lot of direct appeals to Jesus, asking Jesus to help them with their business, since, he asserted, they know that it is Jesus' will that this business grow. The M.C. said that the business (whatever it was) was Jesus' business. In Jesus' name, he asked for them to know the right words to say on Sunday, and that next year, with Jesus' help, their numbers should be more than doubled. He went on like this for some time.

I felt more perplexed than ever; it was the appropriate end to a confusing, morally ambiguous couple of days. On the way to my room I stopped at one of the several bars for a couple of martinis, another form of communion, and read the funnies.

Tomorrow morning I make a brief, informal presentation of the Navy's newly launched research effort on NVGs. A friend once generously said that, with me working in this area, there are at least some moral concerns introduced into the loop. I am absolutely certain that there are many truly moral people distributed throughout this loop. This has to be my faith.

In the meanwhile, as soon as I returned home from the "Lessons Learned" meeting, I submitted an application to the National Institutes of Health. I am hopeful.

ECCLESIA SEMPER REFORMANDA

AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

MARGARET O'BRIEN STEINFELS
THOMAS A. McCABE

Our intrepid editor, with the support of her colleagues, went off in mid-June to give a speech to CORPUS (the Corps of Reserve Priests United for Service, an association of resigned priests). What she had to say caused a stir—"storm" might be more accurate—at the meeting. Since then many letters—pro and con—have come to the *Commonweal* office. The issues raised first by the decision of CORPUS leaders to include the celebration of the Eucharist by some of their members who have left active ministry, then by the objections Steinfels raised to that decision, and then by the letters and continuing discussion seem to require a fuller and more public airing than they have had. After much deliberation about how to go about this (without consuming the next several issues), we have decided to proceed in the following manner: We publish here excerpts from Steinfels's remarks (the full text will be found in *Origins*, July 18, 1991); this is followed by a response from Thomas A. McCabe, co-chairperson for the CORPUS conference and a member of the Renewal Coordinating Committee. Readers are invited to join in the debate and we will publish a selection of your letters (shorter is better) in coming issues.

MARGARET O'BRIEN STEINFELS

I stand at this podium with a conflicting set of feelings. I am both hopeful and heartsick. I am hopeful that you will give me a patient and generous hearing....that you will see in me the same person you kindly invited here last November....I am hopeful that whatever best energies, careful reflection, and deep love for the People of God that have previously operated in your lives and in this organization will again be summoned in your future actions....

But I am also heartsick. I am heartsick, like many of you, because of the impasse that our church appears to have reached in so many areas of its life. I am deeply apprehensive that many holding key positions in the church want to turn their backs on Vatican II, or at best diligently circumscribe the council's significance and impact, viewing it more as a source of misunderstanding and disarray than of conversion and renewal. I am heartsick at the growing polarization in the church and the breakdown of genuine dialogue. I am heartsick that despite the very real problems of the quality and quantity of our ordained leaders, the current mood in the church permits so little honest and thoroughgoing discussion of a whole range of issues, including optional celibacy for the clergy in the Latin Rite and the ordination of women.

But today I am heartsick most of all because of the necessity of registering, in no uncertain terms, my disagreement with the decisions of your leaders to hold a prayer vigil at St. Patrick's Cathedral and, even more, to hold a liturgy this afternoon led by married priests....

My objections to these plans are not merely a matter of individual scruples or conscience. Just as you state that your goals of opening the priesthood to married men and to women are pursued not only for those who feel called to ordination but on behalf of the whole church and its needs, so too the way in which you pursue those goals is justly of significance to the whole church.

So before I explain why I think that what you are about to do here is wrong, theologically, canonically, and ecclesialogically, I would like to say something about the current situation of the whole church, at least as I see it.

It is now over a quarter century since the Second Vatican Council. There was and is much cause for rejoicing. In a way that could never have occurred without the council, the church that declared modern liberties anathema in 1864 (the *Syllabus of Errors*) and signed pacts of self-protection with Mussolini and Hitler in the 1920s and '30s has now become a champion, in some places the foremost champion, of human dignity and liberty for all people. The velvet revolutions in Eastern European nations drew deeply on the spirit and theology of the council. And even now, who knows in what corner of the globe women and men still draw inspiration from the opening lines of *Gaudium et spes*.... Yet, both the partisans of change and the partisans of restoration in the church are exceedingly gloomy. Often enough, they can point to the same reasons for their discour-

agement. Western Europe and Japan, two of the three major centers of modern technological and scientific culture, seem well on their way to becoming totally postreligious societies. In the nations most responsible for Vatican II—Germany and France—the council failed almost entirely to retard the course of secularization. In the United States, the church maintains a good deal of grassroots vitality while the institutional infrastructure seems to be increasingly fragile and in some places in serious disrepair.

I need not dwell on the problems of the priesthood. Some of the most vigorous women's religious orders, perhaps more crucial to the life of the church in the United States than in any other nation, heroically renewed themselves in the fifties and sixties—only to shrink in numbers, sometimes to the point that today they contemplate extinction within a generation. Catholic elementary schools are in the process of being closed even as their educational and religious value to both Catholic and non-Catholic children has become a matter of consensus in church circles as well as among educators and public officials. Catholic higher education, after more than two decades of effort, has not resolved the tension between achieving high academic standards while maintaining its Catholic identity and commitment. On too many campuses this identity and commitment have either faded into standard campus liberalism or taken refuge in a few campus departments or institutes....

Is there anyone who is confident that the faith has been successfully passed on to the next generation?... We fondly focus our gaze on the small number of admirable young people who join various volunteer groups sponsored by religious orders and who do heroic work among the poor here or abroad, and perhaps on our own children whom we instinctively feel have "caught" the church. But what about the far greater number who are passing into adulthood and career with a very meager store of Catholicism's theological and spiritual riches?... They often lack the most elementary habits of prayer or understanding of the sacraments....

These are all problems that a married clergy would have to confront. If we are to be genuinely ecumenical, that means learning from the weaknesses as well as the strengths of our fellow Christians. And it only takes a minute's worth of information-gathering to realize that already there are many churches with a married clergy, both men and women, to the point of surplus, and with democratic structures, and inclusive attitudes, and such a determination to act for justice that they can't wish you a good day without using the word "prophetic." And yet, even with all of this, their church memberships are declining, their congregations are restive, their cultural and intellectual influence is minimal, their young people are also departing.

Every age has its problems. In focusing on our own I do not mean to ignore the good that the church inspires and supports in us.... But there is something particularly dispiriting about our current woes and it is this: After twenty-five years of postconciliar life, both what might be called the party of change and the party of resistance are stuck in their ways, more content with pointing

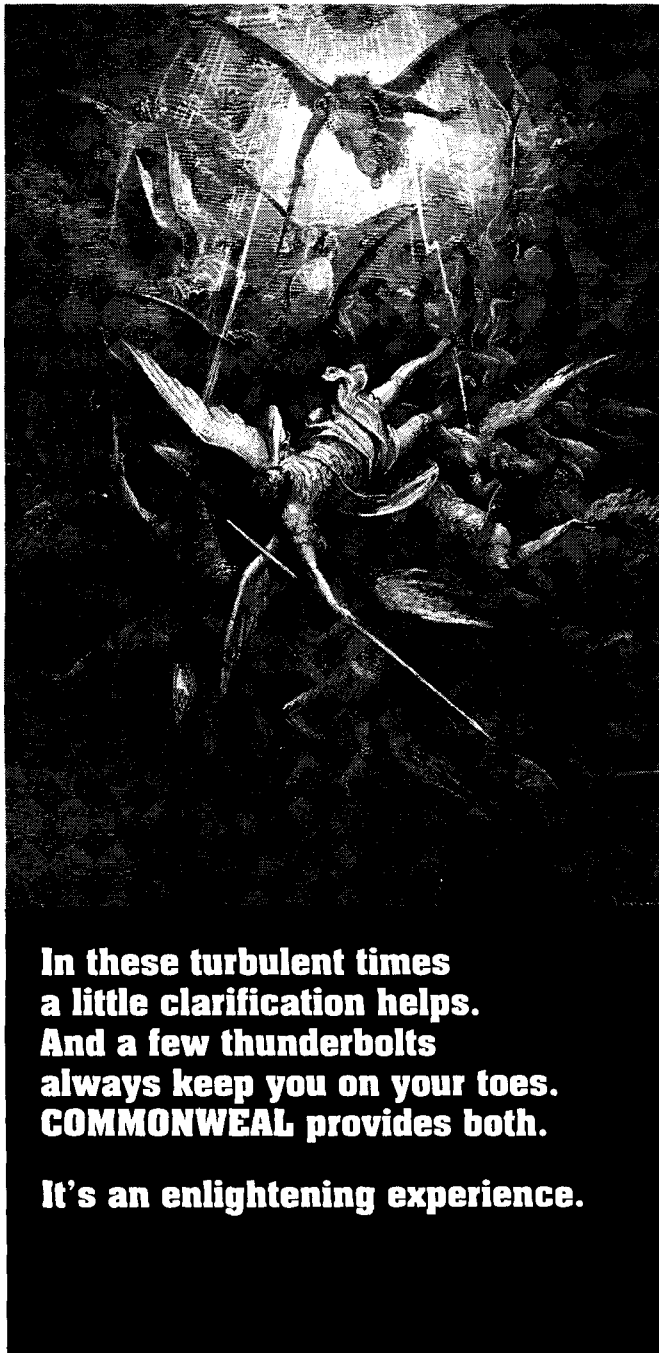
an accusing finger at the other side than at thinking afresh about the challenges we—the whole church—face.

Frankly, I find it less surprising when the party of resistance exhibits this attitude. It is the party of change that once prided itself on candor and self-criticism that surprises. In many sectors of church life it has become as dominant as conservatives are in the hierarchical structure. Liturgy, catechetics and religious education, justice and peace offices, campus ministry, much of the administration of Catholic higher education and social services, much though not all popular spirituality, the discipline of theology as a whole—these are all areas where the party of change has come to dominate. Several of these areas are failing to achieve their objectives—religious education is the outstanding example—and several others, like liturgy, are in seriously ailing condition. Justice and peace offices mobilize a small number but the mass of Catholic laity shifts in a nearly opposite direction. Though Catholic theology is rich in scholarship and insight, too often theological pap and spiritual trendiness color our homilies and popular piety....

It is far too rare, these days, when the party of change raises questions about these embarrassing realities. By contrast, we have developed a whole repertoire of ways to minimize, ignore, or dismiss them. We whistle past the graveyard, telling ourselves that if our children don't go to church or seem to have little knowledge or feeling for their faith, at least they are still concerned about the poor and detested Ronald Reagan.... And when faced with mediocre preaching; vulgar liturgies; apathetic worshipers; idiosyncratic theologizing; unconvinced and wary young people; skeptical, uncommitted, and miserly adults; we can always blame Rome or the timidity of a growing number of bishops. And, of course, we are sure to be at least partially right in this accusation. But being partly right too easily keeps us fixed on defending our turf and our version of reality instead of engaging in self-criticism and on fending off anything that smacks of past practices rather than calmly evaluating proposals regardless of their pedigree.

Can we really afford the same kind of defensive aggressiveness and intellectual conformity in the party of change that we have too often experienced in the party of resistance? Has an agenda developed in the conciliar and post-conciliar years hardened into concrete? Does it function to limit our vision or our thinking?...

Let me bring these generalizations down to earth with a few small examples.... In the last few years, the looming shortage of priests has raised the possibility of a church deprived of the Eucharist. That concern with the centrality of the Eucharist in a sacramental church has been fervently linked with the question of ordaining married people and women. Yet in the years after the council, participation in the Eucharist declined by half among Catholics. Certainly nobody favored this development. There was a fair amount of ink spilled over who and what was to blame, whether *Humanae vitae* or the reformed liturgy or general alienation or the decline of mortal sin or what.... But it is striking to me to recall how little tearing of hair and wringing of hands there was over such a massive, and unanticipated, phenomenon—and which, at least in the United States, was a radical departure from our usual practice. Although the party of change regularly resorted to the language of obligation and exhortation in regard



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to poverty and war, it almost never summoned that kind of moral passion when it came to this fundamental matter of participating at Mass on Sunday. Couldn't an observer from another planet reasonably, if mischievously, ask whether our fervor about the community's need to gather at the Eucharist has been enlivened only when that concern has coincided with something else on the agenda? To wit, the ordination of married men and of women to remedy the clergy shortage.

When it comes to liturgy, to catechetics, to social teaching, to seminary training, to adult education, to family life, to abortion, to formulating a response to our society's sexual chaos—again and again, it does not seem that we will discover satisfactory approaches without abandoning this ping pong match of reaction and counter-reaction between conservatives and liberals.

This sterile polarization in today's church has been reinforced by the appropriation of a now worn and overused tactic for pressing and legitimating change in American society. Imprinted on our moral imaginations during the stirring days of the civil rights struggles and the antiwar movement, this tactic is now the standard resort of almost every aggrieved group.... The tactic involves defiance of normal procedures of due process by turning to direct action—occupying buildings, blocking access, disrupting ceremonies, breaking rules—supplemented with colorful demonstrations, all of which is usually signaled in advance so as to mobilize media coverage. The tactic has become the standard resort of groups on both the right and left, of antiwar, antinuclear, antipollution, antigovernment, antiabortion, anti-AIDS, and anti-Catholic church demonstrators. And though we can see examples of injustice that warrant forms of direct action, by now the public is largely inured to these episodes, and authorities are shrewder about using force to resolve them. Sad experience has also taught us that there are other disadvantages to the techniques. To justify the violation of normal rules, a group must claim to be unusually and even harshly victimized, it must brand the institutional framework as unresponsive, it must declare the process of persuasion through discussion to be futile or unreasonably prolonged. All these attitudes shift the weight within organizations or movements to individuals and viewpoints of a more confrontational character; they license an exaggerated rhetoric of victimhood and oppression and emphasize the skills of media staging rather than those of dialogue, debate, and patient persuasion. Anyone who has watched these dynamics at work in the disintegration of a number of movements for social change, anyone who has reflected on their role in producing the backlash of cynicism and apathy that now dominates American public life, can hardly welcome their introduction into the life of the church at this juncture.

It is in this context of what the church needs a quarter century after Vatican II and what we have learned from the politics of confrontation and media manipulation in the United States that I lament what you plan to do this afternoon. Perhaps I am mistaken, but it seems to me that your actions are more apt to postpone than hasten the acceptance of a married priesthood.

The American church is full of sectarian groups on both the

right and the left. In their certainty, self-righteousness, and impatience, they siphon off much of the larger body's energy and intelligence. What I am saying may sound harsh, but in what you are planning to do this afternoon and evening, I see you too moving to those margins. As you well know, there are already unordained lay people, men and particularly women, who are leading what they consider Eucharists. In many cases their reinvented congregational ecclesiology goes along with a low Christology (or even no Christology at all) and a view of sacrament as symbol that is not recognizably Catholic....It is not for me to judge the spiritual importance of such developments for the individuals involved....But I do question claims that such developments are forces for renewal, rather than signs of fragmentation of the church. And despite the panoply of references your statements make to canon law—as though you would have refrained from today's actions if the canons had been worded differently—you are effectively acting on the same basis as these groups for whom no canon law has legitimacy, and obliterating the lines you have previously drawn to distinguish your own efforts from those freelance developments.

It is above all your use of the eucharistic liturgy as a tool for agitation that makes me heartsick.

I think you know as well as I that your arguments from canon law are filigreed rationalizations that would not win assent even from some of the country's more liberal canon lawyers.

I think you know as well as I that, in a city where there is no shortage of priests, where parishes and priests in good standing are available to you, your claim that to act otherwise than you intend would deny you a Eucharist and say in effect that you have "no right to the Eucharist" is a melodramatic exaggeration.

I think you know as well as I that your description of today's eucharistic celebration as a closed or "private" rather than "public" celebration, besides being a doubtful distinction in eucharistic theology, is belied by the distribution to the media of a press release announcing the event and a press conference inviting coverage. And you may call your gathering at the cathedral a prayer vigil, but do not be so naive as to think that's what the media will call it. What you want to call an act of piety will certainly be reported as an act of defiance....

What you are about to do does not seem to me to presage change but to forestall it, and not only in regard to celibacy. It will not only be church authorities but the ordinary people of God in parish pews who will be convinced that we who hope for change are not to be counted upon to act as though we were accountable to the whole church.

But, some of you may be asking, do we have any alternative? It may or may not be a fair question. It is, in my opinion, an unfair question if it has a hidden, and as I have suggested a very American, premise: do we have any alternative if we are to achieve our goals right away?

Of course no one of us can predict the future, which is always full of surprises and unexpected corrections of course. Who, after all, would have predicted Vatican II? But in all honesty, I do not think that there is any course by which you are likely to achieve your goals in the near future. Your choice is between those that promise the likelihood of achievement at some future

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point and from which you may not personally benefit, and those that at the moment may be personally therapeutic but communally corrosive.

Let me say this directly. I see little chance that the reinstatement of resigned and married priests will occur in your or my lifetimes. If the requirement of celibacy is made optional, it seems to me that it will more likely lead to the ordination of previously unordained married individuals rather than to the reinstatement of the ordained. This is so, at least partly on the Catholic rule of thumb, that anyone with a good idea for changing church teaching or practice, I think here of John Courtney Murray, ought to be made to suffer for it.

What you are embarked upon, then, is a long-range enterprise, one that you may not directly benefit from and one that will require pacing and constant spiritual nurture and reinforcement of ties to the body for which you say you are acting, and to the bishops for whom you say you are willing to work. To suppose that there is little, therefore, that you can do personally to meet the church's needs in the meantime would be to dismiss the vast opportunities for service in the church and the world to which many of you, as well as lay people like myself, are daily attempting to respond.

Even in striving to end the restriction of ordination to male celibates, there is also much to be done even if the effort promises to be slower and less dramatic. Instead of the model of civil disobedience, I suggest you consider the model of the liturgical movement. How many, in the thirties, forties, fifties, and even sixties, expected to hear a restored, vernacular liturgy in their own lifetimes? Yet they engaged in extensive scholarship, sponsored serious journals, held conferences, identified and promoted intermediate steps that fell short of their ultimate hopes. They did not fracture the unity of the church or the unity of the Eucharist. And even then, when change came much more suddenly and extensively than had been anticipated, they discovered that perhaps too much hope had been placed in liturgical renewal alone, apart from a whole array of other necessary changes in the church.

Do not deceive yourselves. What you do today is what you choose to do, not what you have been compelled to do. I am profoundly saddened that I will not be with you at this Eucharist, that what is meant to be the sign of our connection to the whole church is being made a sign of public agitation and division. I hope you have second thoughts, both this afternoon and for the future of this organization.... I beg you not to let the matter rest. Please devote more discussion to the larger issues that I have tried to raise. And thank you very much for your patience and consideration.

(Continued on next page)

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In January 1963, eight prominent, liberal, white Alabama clergymen wrote an open letter to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. They urged King to “wait”; not to break the civil laws of Birmingham by “parading without a permit”; and not to be an “extremist.” Normally, King did not respond to his critics, but because he felt these clergymen were of genuine good will and offered sincere criticism, and because he was in jail serving a sentence for demonstrating for civil rights and had time to write, he composed a lengthy defense of his nonviolent direct-action campaign of civil disobedience. His open letter, dated April 16, 1963, became known as “Letter from Birmingham City Jail.” It is one of his most widely reprinted compositions.

On June 22, 1991, Margaret O’Brien Steinfels, the editor of *Commonweal*, delivered an address at the Fourth Annual Conference of CORPUS—otherwise known as the National Association for a Married Priesthood—in New York City. In her address, Mrs. Steinfels urged the participants at the conference to wait; to abstain from confrontation; not to break canon law; not to follow the tactics of the civil rights movement; not to fragment the unity of the church and the unity of the Eucharist; not to use the Eucharist as a “tool for agitation”; not to be extremists.

Because Steinfels described herself as “heartsick” at the decision of the conference leaders to hold a prayer vigil at St. Patrick’s Cathedral and, even more, to sponsor a liturgy led by married priests, and because her criticisms were sincere and received wide publicity in the Catholic press, there is a need to respond to the issues she raised. Indeed, it is vital that those who see themselves as part of a progressive movement in the church continue to talk with one another.

The decision to hold the prayer service outside St. Patrick’s came after a request, made to Cardinal John O’Connor, for a prayer service to be held within the cathedral had been denied. While the CORPUS conference leadership had thought that it was unlikely Cardinal O’Connor would agree to such a request, they felt that it was a legitimate request, one that bishops in other dioceses might have acceded to. On March 25, 1991, the conference coordinators had written to the cardinal:

We would like to use St. Patrick’s for a prayer service on Saturday evening [June 22, 1991]. We expect 250 people to attend. The theme would be to pray for the reinstatement of married priests and the ordination of women and married men. We would like to use the pulpit both for the readings and commentary on the readings. The prayer service would be no more than one hour in length. We would be glad to rearrange our Saturday evening schedule to accommodate St. Patrick’s fixed schedule if there is a conflict.

One month later, Bishop Patrick Sheridan, the vicar general of the archdiocese, wrote in the cardinal’s name that the stated theme of the prayer service was “not merely controversial but

also an unacceptable presentation in St. Patrick’s.” Parenthetically, it should be mentioned that all thirty local bishops in the New York area declined personal invitations to attend the conference as guests of CORPUS, and that ten other bishops from around the country declined invitations to lead the liturgy and/or a morning or evening prayer.

The analogy to the civil rights movement becomes clearer. When King asked for permission to hold a march in Birmingham, it was denied by the civil authorities in order to preserve the laws of segregation. When the CORPUS leadership asked for permission to hold a prayer service in St. Patrick’s, their request was denied by church authorities because it was deemed “unacceptable” to pray for optional celibacy and for the ordination of women. King made the decision to hold nonviolent demonstrations without a permit. The conference leaders decided to hold a peaceful prayer service across from the cathedral. It was so peaceful that, despite the large numbers it drew—there were over 400 participants—it attracted no television coverage.

Margaret O’Brien Steinfels suggested in her talk that instead of employing the tactics of the civil rights movement, CORPUS should follow the tactics of the liturgical renewal movement. Her implication was that the liturgical movement, unlike the civil rights movement, had not broken any laws. Some of us attended liturgical conferences every summer during the 1950s. At those conferences, Mass was said facing the people when it was still forbidden to do so; there was concelebration of the Eucharist when it was still forbidden; there was participation in parts of the Mass before such participation was formally approved by Rome; the Scriptures were read aloud in English while the celebrant(s) read them so softly in Latin that the Latin could not be heard. All of these events broke both the letter and spirit of church law in those days. But it was done to educate those attending the conferences by showing them approaches they might initiate in their own parishes when they returned home.

In her CORPUS address, Steinfels implied that the liturgical movement pursued its goals in a highly scholarly manner and that because of this, little tension and controversy resulted. On the contrary, Godfrey Diekmann in Collegeville, Gerard Sloyan at Catholic University, Eugene Walsh in Baltimore, H. A. Reinhold in Pittsburgh, and Alfred Longley in Minneapolis caused both tension and controversy. Some parishioners and fellow priests were furious when Longley placed the baptism font at the entrance of his church as a symbol that baptism is the sacrament of initiation into the church. Walsh was criticized for replacing traditional Mass hymns such as “*Ave Maria*” and “*Come Holy Ghost*” with new vernacular hymns. The Longleys and the Walshes are now considered prophets. Then, they were considered “nuts.”

Those who read the journal *Worship* were described as “litticks.” Lay people and priests protested strongly against changing the language of the Mass from Latin to the vernacular. They argued that Mass was “always” said in Latin and that Latin was a symbol of the unity of the church since Catholics could go anywhere in the world and attend Mass in Latin. In the early 1960s, there was considerable controversy over home liturgies,

but they were celebrated often before being officially sanctioned by Rome.

Breaking church law is not new for religious people. In the church, it goes back to Jesus himself. He cured on the Sabbath and allowed his disciples to pick grain and rub it in their hands on that day. For this the scribes and Pharisees "were filled with rage, and discussed together what they might do to Jesus" (Luke 6:11). Steinfels wisely observes that there is "the Catholic rule of thumb, that anyone with a good idea for changing church teaching or practice, I think here of John Courtney Murray, ought to be made to suffer for it." Paul suffered for trying to renew the church. In our own day, besides Murray there are: the Jesuit missionary Vincent Lebbe, the scientist Teilhard de Chardin, and the theologians Leonardo Boff and Charles Curran. I might add to this list of "sufferers" many of the 20,000 American priests and the 110,000 priests worldwide who had to leave the active ministry when they knew that celibacy was no longer for them. This does not mean that each and every one of them is suffering at the hands of the hierarchy. Some of these priests walked away and want nothing more to do with the church. But there is a considerable number, the vast majority, who have stayed in the church, are active in their local parishes, and who are suffering because they are not allowed to celebrate the Eucharist, even as bishops approve a liturgy for priestless Sundays. But more important is the suffering of the people and the parishes who are deprived of these priests' ministry.

But to return to the Eucharist celebrated at the CORPUS conference by three married priests. Was it a valid Mass? Of course. Did it break one or more of the over 1,000 canons in canon law? Most people would say yes. It was a beautiful celebration of the Eucharist in which over 750 Catholics participated, including laymen and laywomen, religious women and religious men, children, young adults, and the elderly, celibate priests and married priests.

Today, more and more married priests are celebrating the Eucharist. They are not doing this on a whim but after careful, prayerful consideration, and usually after being asked to do so by a faith community. All of this is not to imply any disrespect for law in the church, nor to imply any lack of regard for the hierarchy or the pope. It is rather to say with Jesus and with Martin Luther King, Jr., that there are just laws and there are unjust laws. The distinction has nothing to do with disliking a law; it has to do with the common good (the commonweal). Just laws serve and enhance the common good; unjust laws work to its detriment. It is clear to many that the church law mandating priestly celibacy is working against the common good of the church. For example, even in our country, blessed with many vocations to the celibate priesthood, there are almost 2,000 parishes without a resident pastor. When one looks beyond this country and sees that, according to Vatican sources, over 150,000 parishes worldwide are without a resident pastor, then the law that limits priesthood only to celibate males is clearly working against the common good of the church. Mandatory celibacy, to quote Archbishop Rembert Weakland, "works to our detriment as a church."

The issue here is a moral one. It has to do with the people's right to the Eucharist and to pastoral care. It is immoral to allow priestless Sundays. Only time will tell if the actions taken at the CORPUS conference will hasten or postpone the changing of church law on mandatory celibacy.

In his "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," King defended himself against the charge of being an "extremist." He saw his position as that of a centrist between blacks on the right who were either profiting from segregation or so demoralized or afraid that they could do nothing for themselves; and blacks on the left who preached hatred of whites. King—to the end of his life a militant—and his followers were clearly a middle ground, mobilizing blacks into creative nonviolent action without allowing the rhetoric of the movement to degenerate into hatred for any race or social class.

So, also, the movement for a renewed church—one that recognizes that God calls people to the priesthood regardless of gender or marital status—is hardly an extremist movement. It is very much centrist. On the right are those who would deny people the Eucharist rather than have it led by an ordained woman or married man. On the left are those who think that since everyone is a priest by virtue of baptism, ordination is not required for a valid celebration of the Eucharist. CORPUS holds a deep respect for the reality of the ordained priesthood. It is concerned about reforming that priesthood, not destroying it. In today's church, that is a centrist position.

The heart of Steinfels's argument is that "what is meant to be a sign of our connection to the whole church is being made a sign of public agitation and division." The sad fact is that she is correct. All over the country prayer services and *agapes* are being substituted for the Eucharist because there is no agreement on who the "celebrant" should be. Religious women and laywomen at their conferences and gatherings are choosing to forgo the Eucharist rather than "to bring in" someone to "say it." The Eucharist has become a source of division rather than a sign of unity. These are the facts. They will remain the facts until the priesthood is opened to women and to married men who are born Catholics, not just to previously ordained male converts.

Finally, many married priests active in the movement for a renewed, reformed priesthood are not acting simply for themselves. They are not "dying to get back in." While they love the church and the priesthood, they are happy with who they are today: married priests in good marriages who are not celebrating the Eucharist or administering the sacraments but who are involved in efforts to renew the priesthood and to build the kingdom through their work in the world. While they think the pastoral needs will become so great that a renewed priesthood will happen in their lifetime, many realize that they will be too old to be reinstated. It is not for themselves but for the church that they wish to see the priesthood opened to women and married men. They will continue to work hard for reform, but in the long run they will put their faith in the words of Gamaliel: "If this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow it; or else you may even be found fighting against God" (Acts 5: 38-39).

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SCREEN

DEAD WRONG, DEAD RIGHT 'DEAD AGAIN' & 'DEFENSELESS'

With *Dead Again* Kenneth Branagh stoops to conquer and falls flat on his face. The gifted director-star of 1989's wonderful *Henry V* has taken an elaborate piece of misterioso nonsense written by Scott Frank and tried to make of it the sort of romantic melodrama (*Laura, Rebecca, Chinatown*) that keeps successive generations of moviegoers swooning every time its title is mentioned.

The trouble with *Dead Again* is that it is packed with artifice but short on sensuality. A psychic (Emma Thompson) sees herself in a former life (as a pianist also played by Thompson) being threatened with death by a jealous husband (a conductor-composer played by Branagh). Stunned into amnesia by the violence of her visions, she falls into the care first of the Catholic clergy who run an orphanage and then of one of that orphanage's alumni, a private detective (also Branagh). Since the detective and his client seem to be the reincarnations of the doomed couple, we wait for them to fall in love and, when they do, for the dance of death to begin again.

As I have admitted before in this column, I am an absolute idiot when it comes to guessing the who in whodunits. Yet I grasped the solution of Scott Frank's puzzle before the movie was half over. So much for *Dead Again's* futile intricacies. Yet this might still have been an enjoyable film if...

If the characters had some real vitality and charm and weren't just puppets of the plot. For instance, the orphanage director is praised by Branagh as the tough but compassionate savior of the detective's childhood. Yet this same paragon refuses to board the helpless amnesiac for just one more night at his orphanage simply because she screams in her sleep and even though her only alternative is to stay in a snake pit of an insane asylum. What happened to all that compassion? Well, the scriptwriter needed an excuse to put Thompson into Branagh's apartment and subsequently into his bed. Unfortunately, that brings us to our second if.

If there were real romantic, sexual heat between the screen lovers. Actually there is in the former-life flashbacks because Branagh brings some Byronic magnetism to the role of the conductor. But Thompson, a lovely and skilled actress, is pallid in both eras. In and out of clinches, Branagh and Thompson seem about as lyrically intimate with each other as the leads in your average high school play. This, from actors who are actually married to each other and whose courtship scene in *Henry V* had both youthful charm and animality.

If Branagh had cast and directed his other actors with more care and conviction. Andy Garcia, playing a war correspondent returning to his Hollywood beat, is dressed and coifed like a pimp. Why? Robin Williams, as puckish as ever, is cast as a

foul-mouthed, nihilistic ex-psychiatrist, a role that cries out for one of the sleazeball turns in Rip Torn's repertoire, not for Williams's unquenchable cuteness. As a sinister housekeeper, Hanna Schygulla, the iciest vamp since Dietrich, turns mummylike under Branagh's direction. Only Derek Jacobi, as a softly menacing hypnotist, delivers a substantial performance.

If—and this is the decisive if—Branagh were really the sort of baroque stylist who could convert the sow's ear of a jejune script into an exceedingly silky purse. Orson Welles's prestidigitation could transform the paperback hackery of *The Lady from Shanghai* into art, but Branagh can't pull off a comparable trick. With the scenes of hypnotism, nightmare, seance, he is no more than competent. And Branagh fumbles the scenes that exist only to push the plot along. In the patches of dialogue with detective, comic sidekick, and heroine, Branagh, patently bored with the mere functionality of the scenes, shuttles the sidekick about the room and in and out of some of the clumsiest blocking seen outside film school. Nothing in Branagh's staging convinces me that he took anything in *Dead Again*'s story seriously in the way that even the most fantastic story must be taken so that it may grip the viewer. He simply coasts between the special effects. In fact, *Dead Again* comes across less like a story than a storyboard.

How did the exciting artist of *Henry V* become the dogged technician of *Dead Again*? The answer may be as simple as this: Branagh is the sort of director who rises or sinks to the level of his script. He's not a wizard who can turn lead to gold but a faithful artistic courier who delivers the gold intact. I await his next Shakespearean shipment (*Othello* is rumored to be in the works) with eagerness.

Judged strictly as a puzzle, *Defenseless* (script by James Hicks, direction by Martin Campbell) surpasses *Dead Again* because its surprises and solutions are more startling yet more believable and don't depend on supernatural hokum. While *Dead Again* is nothing but a flimsy portfolio of notions, *Defenseless* has a real theme to hold it together: freedom, unaccompanied by wisdom, can destroy you as surely as subservience. If that sounds like a bromide, there's nothing bromidic in the way Hicks and Campbell dramatize the idea. The real power of this thriller (about a lawyer who beds down with the husband of an old Smith College classmate only to end up defending the classmate from the charge of murdering the husband) resides in a series of dramatic moments that illuminate and advance the story. And then *outlive* the story. In a couple of weeks, I may not be able to recount the plot of *Defenseless* but I'll remember the following:

Wearing a white dress while visiting her lover and his wife in their deluxe house, the lawyer sits on a spotlessly white couch. The combined whitenesses seem to erase the lawyer, seem to drown her in the rampant upward mobility of her friends. She evidently feels what we see, panics, spills some red wine onto the carpet, moves to clean it up, looks up to recognize a hatred in the eyes of her old schoolmate that has nothing to do with spilled wine. And this hatred helps march the movie to its denouement.

In court, the lawyer batters a detective's testimony with such

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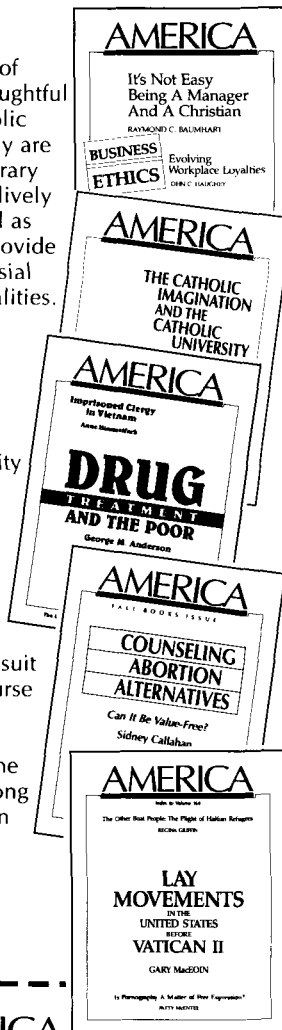
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zest that the detective, a tough customer, becomes the still center of the lawyer's storm. Even as he tries to respond to the cross-examination, the cop can't help noticing the stress that underlies the lawyer's frenzied joy in battle. His eyes narrow as he begins to realize her personal stake in the case, and we begin to feel apprehensive for the lawyer. Later, our apprehensions are justified.

Having taken the murdered man's daughter to a public beach, the lawyer squirms into a bathing suit under cover of a blanket. The teen-ager simply stands and strips. Watching the girl through the lawyer's eyes, we see that the girl's brazenness isn't a sexy come-on but an index to her contempt for her own body and, underlying that, her contempt for life itself. And the lawyer's understanding of this contempt helps crack the case.

I don't think I've seen another murder mystery that depends so much on people watching people and interpreting what they see. The acting makes it work. Barbara Hershey, as the heroine, is emotionally ambidextrous. This is a fast-tempo performance—the lawyer's feelings constantly collide or spill into each other—but Hershey never skates on the surface. Her work here is furious and lucid. Mary Beth Hurt makes the wife an iron butterfly with a secretion of poison. As the detective, Sam Shepard provokes a question: how did this most verbally exuberant of playwrights become the most taciturn of good screen actors? How do the two beings coexist in the same body, feed on the same temperament? Or does the excessiveness of one make the economy of the other possible, as Hyde's ferocity spurred Jekyll on to greater benevolence? I nominate Shepard the successor to Steve McQueen as Cold-Eyed Master of Minimalism, but not even McQueen was as tightly coiled as Shepard.

You won't like *Defenseless* if you feel that all good murder mysteries should take place in rural England and be solved by dotty maiden ladies who memorize train schedules. But speaking for myself, the emotional heat of this movie makes *Dead Again* look like a bad case of romanticism-in-the-head.

RICHARD ALLEVA

STAGE

ALL THE WORLD'S A RUIN 'FOREIGN COUNTRY' & 'SHEETS'

Increasingly one goes away from the traditional venues in search of theater. The most recent En Garde Arts production took me to 106th Street and Central Park West, to that grand old derelict of a building (a designated landmark) that Charles C. Haight designed in the late 1880s as the New York Cancer Hospital. Later the Towers Nursing Home, it was closed in a cloud of scandal in the 1970s and it has been increasingly at the mercy of vandals. The building's own story might have provided the spine for a play—as that of the Victory Theatre did last year for the En Garde Arts production of Mac Wellman's *Crowbar*—but Charles L. Mee, Jr., the author of *Another Person Is a Foreign Country*, wants to work in a

different way with the Towers. "It's a place where people went and had the door shut on them, and were cast out of the mainstream," he told *New York Newsday* (September 5).

The production is site specific in a physical sense, as En Garde Arts offerings always are. It makes use of the Towers' vast courtyard and the threatening interior façade: the windows, the scaffolding that suggests fire escapes, the flight of steps that spill into the space from one corner. But it is the idea of the place in its less savory days that is central to Mee's play, to Daniel Schreier's music, to Anne Bogart's direction: the nursing home as asylum as prison as ruin. Largely plotless, *Another Person* brings to a dinner party a collection of what once would have been considered grotesques if one were talking about a Luis Buñuel film, but are here presented as people whose physical and psychological differences from the norm (whatever that is) isolate them as we wall them off with compassion, contempt, fear, uneasiness. As with most of the audience, I suspect, my eyes kept coming back to Maria Clark, an attractive woman with expressive hands and a truncated body that dwindled into barely functional legs. For most of the evening, she was carried around or sat on the table like an animated centerpiece, but at one point she had a speech about pity and how it is based on insufficient knowledge, suggesting that she might be happier than those who did not know how to respond to her presence. She and the other characters were at once individuals and metaphors for a larger cultural and political isolation that was Mee's main theme.

Some of the performers, like Clark, were the disabilities they represented: the Lighthouse Agency Choir, for instance, blind witnesses to the action, one of whom kept reaching down to assure his dog that all was well in the turmoil around them. Psychological distress had to be acted, but size, color, age were explicit in the casting. The concept was impressive; the setting fascinating. The movement from introduction of the characters through riotous destruction to rebirth (Ajax, the deaf character, dies dramatically and is brought back to life) is clear enough, but the journey is strewn with stumbling blocks as well as felicitous passages. Ajax (Bruce Hlibok) has a lovely speech (translated against his wishes by one of the chorus) about how he could not hear music but could feel it in the bench, and how he came to love the piano for its beauty and its silence. In contrast is a deadpan description by David Steinberg, crotch-high to Terence Mintern, who describes the sexual apparatus of Ethyl, a hermaphrodite; the speech would be simply tedious if it were not an occasion for Mintern, a transvestite veteran of Charles Ludlum's company, to put aside Ethyl's initial toughness to display giant vulnerability alongside the assurance of tiny Steinberg. The text is full of anecdotes, real and bogus natural history, and, alas, general statements about life that sometimes come across as comic apothegms, sometimes as platitudes. There is a large chorus which, for some reason, the program calls "Angels." At first, dressed as waiters, they intone, "May we serve you?" Later, in black tank tops, they become menacing as they join the principals in images of demotic collapse that, despite Bogart's ingenuity, provide more descent-into-chaos doings than the performance really needed.

Despite its defects, *Another Person* was an earnest play in a spirited production in a fine setting. By the time this review appears, the seats, the lights, the performers, the echoing voices will be gone; and the landmark courtyard will have gone back to collecting its debris.

Chris Cinque's solo performance, which I saw recently at the Painted Bride in Philadelphia, was a far cry from the splendor—past and present—of the En Garde Arts production. But it, too, was dealing with the outsider and with an insistence on the perception of self that refuses to be a foreign country.

Clean Sheets (part 2 of *Growing Up Queer in America*), is a fairly straightforward narrative about a lesbian love affair that turns ugly and dangerous. The situation is a picnic with the speaker's dead cousin Michael—dead of AIDS presumably, although that is never said—whose photograph (actually Cinque's picture)

sits in a beach chair surrounded by junk food of the 1950s while Cinque tells him her unhappy story. Looking like the tomboy next door, Cinque does a Southern, working-class woman, wryly perky, whose perfect love affair dissolves when the lover becomes both suicidal and murderous. Cinque plays everyone around her, not so much creating characters as doing varying voices which suggest the speaker's idea of friend and foe alike. At the end, drinking heavily, she tries to commit suicide, but she gets distracted from her attempt to drown herself by something shimmering and white in the distance. It turns out to be sheets on a clothesline, which brings the piece full circle, back to the clean sheets that six-year-old Michael insisted on when she visited him—from knowing innocence to knowing innocence, perhaps. "I was saved by laundry," she says. Often funny, sometimes soft where it intended to be tough, almost too careful about its edible 1950s artifacts, *Clean Sheets* was an effective solo piece by a personable young woman.

GERALD WEALES

BOOKS

All things counter and spare

Admit that Gerard Manley Hopkins's strength was artistic greatness and his weakness psychic imbalance and this biography has a neatly polar form. But Robert Bernard Martin's willingness to rest the biographical evidence on the razor sharp vision of the poetry also makes reading the story of Hopkins's life deeply painful. So much *gravitas* weighting such a pointed view! The priest-poet, his biographer, and their readers cannot but be driven into dis-ease by the cruel mysteries of flesh and spirit. Martin handles his subject with such deftness and alert qualification that he avoids any sense of the reductive: however, character is fate.

A self-willed young Oxford man as pious as [Hopkins] could hardly have helped becoming progressively High Church in inclination. Having moved in that direction, he had a sense of compulsion to go as far as possible, so that he finally became a convert. Once he was a Roman Catholic ... no chance of his not being

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

A Very Private Life

Robert Bernard Martin

G.P. Putnam's Sons, \$29.95, 448 pp.

Edward Wheeler

ordained. And ordination almost inevitably meant that he would not be a simple parish priest or even a member of one of the easier orders. In his quiet way Hopkins was a very headstrong man, determined on extremes. One important ingredient that had been left out of his nature was moderation. Once begun, a course of moral action, particularly a difficult one, had to run its full length before he could let it go in peace. Give [*sic*] his usual preference for the harder of his alternatives, his choice of order seems almost inevitable, since in all obvious ways the Jesuits would be the most difficult for him, as well as for his family and friends.

Martin adds, in another context, with

only a hint of the ominous: "Yet it is possible for a man to be crushed by a duty he has freely embraced."

Martin is extraordinarily fair and is determined to right some old biographical wrongs. He argues for the great debt Hopkins and Hopkins's readers owe Robert Bridges, the close friend and editor of the first edition of the *Poems*. Against the widespread disparagement of Bridges as a fusty Victorian in the years when Hopkins was seen as a protomodernist, Martin shows how much Bridges meant to his college friend and correspondent and how much he had to forgive in Hopkins's frequently insensitive and demanding letters. On the other hand, rejecting Bridges's negative assessment of the effect of the priesthood upon Hopkins, Martin shows how essential for Hopkins was his Jesuit vocation and how concerned his superiors were to support and to promote this talented but eccentric priest.

The order was strict, but it was also solid, and Hopkins needed a firm structure of belief and behavior within which to move.... Even if the Jesuits, like almost everyone else

who knew him, failed to recognize his rare quality, they were very kind to him and constantly put up with his awkward but lovable personality. One might ask where he would have been happier.

Where happier indeed, for it is a sad story Martin has to tell. There are really two points of focus in the “very private life”—Martin leads us from Oxford and the emotional climax of Hopkins’s life in his relationship with D.M. Dolben to what we would call today a nervous breakdown or mental illness in Dublin. But no matter what the notebooks and poems might suggest to us about Hopkins’s sexual orientation, Martin argues that we can scarcely think of him as homosexual when the word itself was not coined until after his death. This is more than a quibble. For the concept of “a homosexual life style” did not exist as it does today. In fact Martin takes the bulk of six chapters to indicate to us just how unrevealing a label it is when applied to High Church Oxford undergraduates of the 1860s. Although Freud’s name is mentioned in passing, Martin’s analysis is far from Freudian. We get sensible caveats repeatedly (e.g., “...we are in danger of misunderstanding the century if we try to look at it from a wholly post-Freudian view-point ...”). On the other hand we are not reading hagiography: this is Hopkins in such detail that we cringe as did poor Gulliver at the sight of the mammoth Brobdingnagians.

The torment of Hopkins’s life in Dublin makes even sadder reading, if possible, than that of the poet’s self-lacerations in his Oxford journal. Again, with admirable clarity, Martin sorts through the bureaucratic and ecclesiastical intrigue and places Hopkins’s appointment as professor of Greek at University College in Dublin in its corrosive political context. He also makes clear how after twenty years in the Society of Jesus, Hopkins was by most people’s reckonings a failure: He had not really succeeded in any post he had taken up, did not go on for the fourth year of theological studies, and was judged by his own provincial as a misfit: “He is clever, well-trained, teaches well but has never succeeded well; his mind runs in eccentric ways.... I should be doing no kindness in sending you such a man so eccentric.” Nevertheless, Hopkins

was sent, a precious, aloof, English Jesuit, prone to complain of overwork, incapable of keeping order in his lectures, and living amidst fellow priests who suspected him of malingering: “It is hard to ignore this barely concealed hostility to Hopkins in the denials by his brother Jesuits of his being overworked, even if it is no longer certain what had caused their resentment.”

It is a credit to Martin’s skill in presenting Hopkins’s character that we accept the inevitability of Hopkins’s mental collapse under the pressures of his Dublin failure with little sense of demeaning the priest or poet. The inner divisions of Hopkins’s personality, the sensuousness leagued against asceticism, the fear of “mortal beauty” and delight in the Incarnation in nature, the “what I do is me” and the “Time’s



eunuch,” have been so well established that they move with the necessity of another Passion to conclusion. In so far as the priest and poet are separable, Martin points to the central artistic problem which Hopkins had to solve:

Hopkins still felt the potentiality of sin in his love of external nature and in his love of individual human beings. To put too much love into the perception of one flower or into the feeling for one friend was to neglect man’s primary duty of love of God; his love of the specific would probably be antagonistic to his devotion to the generic, which was ultimately nearest to the Divine.

In poems such as “The Windhover” and “The Wreck of the Deutschland” Hopkins solved the problem, in some sense getting the priorities right, “buckling” under and

yet triumphing. The driving but contained sexuality of his vision is indistinguishable from his spirituality:

Hopkins is not recreating sexual experience, rather he is drawing on the subliminal power of its expression. This is not to be prurient, only to point out with what completeness of personality he wrote when he was at full stretch, uniting the spiritual and the physical in the pattern that is central to the poem.

“The Dark,” “Terrible,” or “Sonnets of Desolation” are another matter; they seem to “to give rigorous shape to what was frightening and dimly understood, just as he had chosen the most demanding of orders when he became a Jesuit.... poetry helped him mediate between spiritual aspiration and the realities of daily life.” Yet even so, “the inspiration which comes directly out of terror... does not really transcend it.” They are poems of sterility, of barrenness, and desiccation. We have, in short, a falcon that does not emerge from its dive and out of that experience, poems “like nothing else in English poetry since the Metaphysical poets.” At a terrible price, one might say, and indeed the biography provides us no bottom line for that divine economy which doesn’t reckon in quite the double entry way of earthly ledgers. “I am so happy, I am so happy” were Hopkins’s dying words. We don’t have to look further than the retreat notes he penned some months earlier for their negative counterpart: “I began to enter on that course of loathing and hopelessness which I have so often felt before, which made me fear madness and led me to give up the practice of meditation.”

Any admirer of Hopkins’s poetry cannot read Martin’s biography without both a sense of gratitude to the writer and a sense of compassion for his subject. He has used previously unavailable materials in a discerning way and has from his deep understanding of Victorian sensibility provided a brilliant account of Hopkins’s Oxford years. Yet there is a catch: The biography is guided by a belief in Hopkins’s preeminence as poet, a view not all share and which to some extent, given the woeful tenor of Martin’s narrative, is undercut by the story of Hopkins’s life. Any honest reading of this book has to make one ask

if a life lived in such self-imposed constraints, where “thoughts against thoughts in groans grind,” can produce the great poems of the age. The corpus is small and must make up in intensity what it lacks in size. Still, the selected bibliography points the direction to literary studies which make the case for Hopkins’s greatness, and a rereading of the poems cannot but renew a sense of their power and originality. But it is odd to come away from a biography feeling the need to substantiate the writer’s basic premise. Perhaps another Charles Williams (the “mystical” novelist and Hopkins’s second editor) might someday

give us the spiritual vision of Hopkins’s inner life, but we face in *A Very Private Life* not only the paradox of Hopkins the poet and the man, but the larger relationships between art and life and between world and spirit. It might be best to close by letting Hopkins speak for himself by quoting a poem Martin curiously doesn’t mention but which also comes from the Dublin years; Hopkins believed that:

I am all at once what Christ is, since
he was what I am, and
This Jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch,
matchwood, immortal diamond,
Is immortal diamond.

the stick that weighted the linen bathroom window shade from its slot, sat on the toilet, put her mouth around the muzzle of a 12-gauge shotgun and used the stick to push the trigger. I was in my crib. I would have heard the explosion.” His older brother, Stanley, then two years old, “found the oceanic body, draining its sea of blood.”

Following his mother’s death Richard’s oldest brother, Mack, was sent to live with relatives in Washington State. Richard, Stanley, and their father boarded for five tolerable years with a pleasant family but “thereafter...lodged to other people’s profit, precariously, wherever Dad could find to go to ground.”

The Arthur Rhodes his son presents is physically powerful, emotionally remote, and morally weak. In a defensive letter written late in his life, he tells Richard, “You were left with me and i did the best i could.” The lower case letter of his first person pronoun seems tragically appropriate. After a few years as a nomadic single parent, he married a veteran of “four or five” previous marriages, “a mantrap, someone who bushwhacked husbands and cleaned them out. Dad became her plow horse; she worked him for more than fifteen years, until he died of cancer of the stomach in 1964. Stan thinks she married once more after that.”

Their father’s new wife told Richard and Stanley that “we have a few rules around here,” introducing them to a twenty-eight-month-long nightmare. “I don’t believe she began with a calculated program of coercion,” Rhodes writes, “any more than the Nazis began with a calculated program beyond expulsion for the European Jews,” but “since we were children, and had few rights in the first place, since our father was too cowardly to defend us from brutalization, everything became possible for her as well.” In addition to routine physical battery, their stepmother, “as diseases do,

DOMESTIC DESTINIES

A HOLE IN THE WORLD

Richard Rhodes

Simon and Schuster, \$19.95, 271 pp.

SOMEDAY

Andrew H. Malcolm

Alfred A. Knopf, \$22, 296 pp.

Michael O. Garvey

Personal suffering endows the sufferer with an authority which it seems almost blasphemous to question. Your anguish, shame, grief, horror, and helplessness usually erupt from a precinct of your soul which I may enter only as an invited guest. My primary obligation is compassion—not to snoop around nor to opine, but simply to share your pain.

As autobiographers, Andrew Malcolm and Richard Rhodes have in common a principled refusal to invoke such authority, offering their private pain to public scrutiny on a hunch that it might be of more than personal significance. These days, even such perfunctory recognitions of human community are precious. It’s difficult to imagine either of these writers agreeing with Anna Quindlen’s baleful defense of suicide in a recent column: “And if that

day comes, whose business is it, really, but my own and that of those I love?” People, love, and people’s business, she implies, are isolable entities, like Legos, which it is appropriate to select, stick together, and pull apart whimsically. Malcolm and Rhodes are more imaginative than that.

Rhodes’s childhood was the sort of enormity which Ivan Karamazov might well have included in his argument for clinging to unappeased anger rather than embracing the kingdom that Jesus proclaims. Ivan will have no part of a harmony which includes the suffering of innocents, but the suffering innocent who is the protagonist of *A Hole in the World* becomes remarkably capable of forgiveness and emerges into late middle age “amazed and grateful that he never forgot how to play.” His eloquent memoir seems less splendid autobiography than an occasion of grace. It’s feasible that a terribly oppressed and frightened little boy could learn to write fine prose. That he could also learn to love, to pity, and to forgive is mystery pure and simple.

Rhodes was born in 1937 in Kansas City, where his father worked as a boilermaker’s helper for the Missouri Pacific railroad. At the beginning of his life, “the world aquired a hole” when his twenty-nine-year-old mother committed suicide. Rhodes was barely a year old at the time. “She slipped

REVIEWERS

EDWARD WHEELER is chairman of the English Department at the Williams School in New London, Connecticut.

MICHAEL O. GARVEY, a columnist for the National Catholic Reporter, works in the Public Relations and Information office at the University of Notre Dame.

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sought to harness our physiology to her own ends." She alternately starved the boys and made them eat moldy bread or rotten eggs. She barred them from use of the toilet at night. She "funneled us into smaller and smaller spaces of physical and mental confinement—less food, less room, less nurture, less hope.... In time, under her vicious regimen, we might have come to occupy no space at all."

Their lives were saved one day when Stanley, "a thirteen-year-old boy taking responsibility for a frightened younger brother and two criminally irresponsible adults" sought sanctuary in a Kansas City police station. He refused to go home and insisted on Richard's rescue. A juvenile court intervened, ordered that the two boys be removed from their home and sent them to the Andrew Drumm Institute, an orphanage near Independence, Missouri. Rhodes sits today on the Institute's board of trustees.

The Drumm Institute was no Dickens novel ending, and Rhodes speaks of three subsequent decades of depression, anxiety, broken marriages, and alcoholism, all of

them driven by rage. Nearly fifty, he met a woman "who needed me as much as I needed her," realized that he must choose between her and his rage, and chose. "We understood early in our relationship that we each protected within ourselves a wounded child. We cherish those children; nurturing and healing them is the mutual work of love we've set ourselves."

Rhodes believes that each of his books repeats a story about "one or several men of character who confront violence, resist it or endure it and discover beyond its inhumanity a narrow margin of hope." *A Hole in the World* certainly fits in that canon. The love of the two brothers, Stanley's devotion and bravery, and Richard's recovery and merciful retrospective are all luminous in a narrative which might almost serve to illustrate St. Paul's bizarre insistence in a letter to persecuted Roman friends that hope in the teeth of suffering "is no mockery."

As presented in *Someday*, Malcolm's childhood was as tranquil as Rhodes's was horrific. An only child of kindly parents, he was loved, supported, and encouraged

from his mother's womb to his wordprocessor at the *New York Times*, where he has written, among other things, startling stories about the manner in which Americans negotiate death. His amiable, conversational style can as easily evoke the funkiness and particularity of his secure boyhood as the desolation of his decision to remove a respirator from his seventy-five-year-old mother as she lay dying "in a windowless private hospital with the television on."

The recurrent "someday" of Malcolm's narrative is, of course, that moment one would rather not think about, when death comes, demanding oneself or one's beloved. "In most families," he writes, "death is the *d*-word, not to be spoken. One day Grandma, now comfortable with her own approaching mortality, speaks over Sunday dinner. 'Someday when I'm gone—,' she says. But her voice is drowned out by her offspring and their spouses. 'Oh Grams,' they say amid nervous laughter, 'you're going to outlive us all.' And the children, peering out from behind their mashed potatoes, get the message that death is right up there with sex on the list of family unmentionables." Anyone familiar with Irish wakes will have difficulty recognizing themselves or their relatives in this tableau, but Malcolm does his readers an admirable service with his unflinching descriptions of the approach of death, his mother's ordeal, his own dismay, and the lingering sadness and bewilderment which still afflict him.

Aside from a few early lines about a fatuous sort of Sunday school religion, Malcolm has surprisingly little to say about God in his book. I don't mean this as a pious criticism of an autobiography whose generous author found it a real comfort, in the wake of his mother's death "to chisel, sand, and buff the words to the proper polish and put them in order, in case they might help others" through similar suffering, but the indifference seems worth noting. Malcolm amply demonstrates and rightfully laments the fact that we have become as diffident about death as our parents were about sex, but this reticence is nothing compared with our bashfulness about worship. After all, *every* one worships, and when "someday" arrives, what can be a more important question than the name of God?

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There has been a spate of books in recent years dealing with Marian apparitions and shrine sites. Why this should be so is not hard to fathom. Liberationists have an intense interest in popular religion and turn, naturally enough, to the tenacious hold of such figures as Our Lady of Guadalupe. Other scholars find a ready locus for testing theories about mythos, ritual, and sacralized space in a world where the conventional wisdom says such matters are in decline. It is also a commonplace to see the messages emanating from such apparitions as projective attempts to center a world which is perceived to be in disequilibrium; hence the combination of apocalyptic and exhortative flavors in such messages.

Zimdars-Swartz's book concerns itself with six Marian apparitions: La Salette and Lourdes in the last century; Fatima in the early twentieth century; and three more contemporary events: San Damiano in Italy; Garabandal in Spain; and Medjugorje in Yugoslavia. In her final chapter she also considers the curious apparitions at Necedah (Wisconsin) which ended up in the creation of a rather loony cult move-

Encountering Mary: From La Salette to Medjugorje, by Sandra L. Zimdars-Swartz, Princeton University Press, \$24.95, 342pp.

ment not unlike the Bayside (New York) apparitions which she does not discuss.

The merit of this work rests mainly in its careful reconstruction of the apparition events as they evolved from the discrete experiences of seers into public events with accompanying structures to support them, i.e., what sociologists, following Weber, would call the institutionalization of charisms. The last part of the book is a modest excursus in interpretation (she resists the temptation to reductionism which mars some recent studies) but her

LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM is chair of the Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame.

Varieties of Catholic experience

Lawrence S. Cunningham

interpretative observations are hardly startling. Zimdars-Swartz has neither the hermeneutical sophistication of Victor and Edith Turner's work on Mexican Marian sites nor the shrewd eye of Alan Neames whose book, not cited in her bibliography, *The Happening at Lourdes* (1967) is still one of the best on the topic.

A Marian subculture, orbiting around this or that apparition, is still very much a part of the Catholic world. One could make the case that the hard-fought battle not to have a separate document on Mary at Vatican II was partially motivated to check the more rococo formulations of Marian belief; a belief fueled, in large part, by the energy derived from the piety emanating from Lourdes and Fatima. The symbiosis, or lack thereof, between "high" theology and popular religion in contemporary Catholicism is a fascinating one but this book reflects little acquaintance with the former and even the author's knowledge of the latter seems bookish (she has some-one "saying" a "station" of the cross). Still, for all of these weaknesses, this is a good *descriptive* work but only middling when it comes to interpretation.

Antiwar activists, like the Plowshares Movement (a loose coalition which emerged from the activities of the Berrigan brothers, Daniel and Philip) are also preoccupied with apocalyptic scenarios but their visions come from an analysis of the here and now with little inspiration from the Beyond. The late William Clebsch once argued that Christian activism (as distinct from Christian succor/charity/pleas for jus-

tice) only became possible after the revolutionary period of the late eighteenth century with its doctrine that social structures are not of divine right but of human making. In this country, activism has taken two broad forms: active participation in the political process to reform this or that structural injustice (e.g., agitating for better housing for the poor) and symbolic activism which hopes to show, by prophetic gesture and/or public resistance, that certain structures are evil and need to be overthrown. The Plowshares Movement belongs to that latter category. Like their Marian counterparts, they see themselves as true believers with the rest of the world going to hell in a handbasket because people will not listen.

Wilcox is hardly a dispassionate chronicler of these symbolic gestures as one might have guessed when informed, on the dust jacket, that he is also the author of

Uncommon Martyrs: The Plowshares Movement and the Catholic Left, by Fred A. Wilcox, Addison-Wesley, \$18.95, 249 pp.

Grass Roots: An Anti-Nuke Source Book. His story follows the pattern of a metaphorical dance: a small group enters a weapons center and then damages some armaments; they await arrest and on trial try to explain (with varying degrees of success) why they did what they did; they are sentenced to prison and off they go, often after having thanked the judge and jury. They are released and the cycle begins again. Their models range from Thoreau (in the Concord jail) to the White Rose movement in Nazi Germany as justifications for their actions with the Nuremberg trials as cautionary tales against inactivity and complicity in what they see as immoral actions.

What is one to make of all this? Wilcox's book is too *parti pris* upon which to make an informed judgment (he is a good writer but constitutionally incapable of spelling proper names correctly). But here, for whatever it is worth, is my reaction, not to this book, but to the actions described in it: profound ambivalence. There is one

side of me that looks at these folks, for all their heroic exertions, as self-absorbed sectarians who pass themselves off as the True Jerusalem facing down a benighted and complacent Middle Class (i.e., me) who will not see the truth. On the other hand, when reading the smug pieties of the New Catholic Right or, worse, thinking about the Ollie Norths of this world, I remember that prophets are never honored in their own time or in their place. It is that tiny itching doubt that may be the sole gift that the Plowshares people have given us.

The Monk's Tale: A Biography of Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B. by Kathleen Hughes, R.S.C.J., Liturgical Press, \$18.95, 383 pp.

Godfrey Diekmann is one of the authentic giants of the liturgical renewal in the Roman Catholic church. A monk of St. John's Abbey (Collegeville), he had the good fortune of a European education (in the early 1930s) at a time when the great ferment of liturgical studies was in full bloom both in Germany and France. Long associated with the journal *Orate Fratres* (now *Worship*) and, after some contretemps with Roman authorities, a *peritus* at the Second Vatican Council, Diekmann had a central role in the shaping of the document on the liturgy. After the council, he was a core member of the International Commission for English in the Liturgy (ICEL). A patristics scholar by training (his doctoral dissertation in Rome was on Tertullian), he has been an indefatigable speaker and retreat master, promoter of the liturgy and social justice, while also devoting his spare (!) time to everything from his editing responsibilities to consulting on the building of the abbey church at Collegeville and being a pioneering supporter of the ecumenical center at Tantur in Israel.

Kathleen Hughes's biography is an admiring one but that is understandable given both the stature and importance of the man in the history of the American church in general and the liturgical life of the church in particular. It is good that books like this are appearing since many

of the *dramatis personae* at the Second Vatican Council are reaching a certain age. Their stories need to be told and those who are reluctant to write their own are fortunate to have dedicated biographers. Diekmann was always reticent about writing books and one finds it hard to imagine that he would write his own story. His biographer must be pleased that he kept a diary during his stay in Rome for the sessions of the council, for her telling of those days is much enhanced by that resource. Similarly, the abbey archives contain letters he wrote from Europe as a student which allow us some entry into the heady world of studies and travels that he undertook in the 1930s.

Father Diekmann is still alive and active at his abbey. He should be very pleased by this book which is, in the best senses of the words, a biography and a memoir: a life told against the background of great events and great persons. Those interested in the contemporary history of the church will find this a rewarding and useful work. Hughes takes her title from Chaucer, of course, but unlike the monk who rode to Canterbury and was pilloried by Chaucer for his unmonastic frivolity and love of luxury, Diekmann's life demonstrates how the authentic monk can speak from the cloister to a much larger world when he takes seriously the Benedictine motto to pray and work.



The one thing that the early medieval Irish church never imported from the continent was the Rule of Saint Benedict. The Irish monasteries were *sui generis* and their influence on Irish culture was profound. Bitel's work studies the relationship of these early monasteries to the broader culture by a judicious use of the extant sources and by a critical reading of the hagiographic literature which has survived. The Irish monasteries were sacred places in which the monks protected the locus of divine power (the relics of the saints) and acted as mediators between the world outside their circular settlements and the great mysteries of God.

The word *symbiosis* seems most apt for a description of how Bitel approaches her subject. She is interested in the interchange between monastic vision and nature; monks and the complex rules of kinship;

Isle of the Saints: Monastic Settlement and Christian Community in Early Ireland, by Lisa M. Bitel, Cornell University Press, \$28.95, 268 pp.

monastic particularity and social class; the intricate demands of hospitality; and the ways in which monks could engage in role reversals to sanctify what was seen as bad. Thus, exile was a dreaded punishment because it meant a symbolic death through separation from the social network. For the monk, however, the act of voluntary exile was the ultimate form of asceticism because it meant that the monk would abandon all for the service of God.

The great age of vernacular Irish monasticism began to decline in the twelfth century as the more rationalized forms of Benedictine and Cistercian monasticism came to the Island; the circular settlements with their wattle huts gave way to the rectangular cloisters constructed as stone fortresses. What remained is deep in the Irish spirit: a penchant for ferocity in religious expression, a love for drinking (a common *topos* in hagiography), an aching nostalgia for Ireland by those in exile, a deep capacity for making prayer a poem, and the monastic custom of *troscud*: fasting against another person as a public protest against injustice

and as a means, as Bitel notes, of shifting their "position from weaker to stronger partner in a social relationship."

Bitel's book is exceptionally well researched and very well written. It sums up a huge amount of work done on Irish monasticism over the past fifty years and, as such, is a welcome companion to John Ryan's classic work *Irish Monasticism* (1931; reprinted by Cornell University Press in 1972). Ryan is still the book to read to understand Irish monastic spirituality but Bitel complements his work by her sophisticated sense of social history. I very much liked it and learned a great deal from it.

The Galileo affair has attracted an enormous amount of scholarly attention, both from historians and philosophers of science, and from apologists/critics of the Catholic church. The merit of Blackwell's book is to focus on a well-defined topic: the role of the Scriptures in the controversy and the ancillary question of who had the authoritative right to interpret those Scriptures. It should not come as a surprise that this was a "front burner" issue after the Council of Trent since the question of the Bible was a neuralgic point in Catholic-Protestant polemics.

Galileo enthusiastically endorsed Trent's position that the authoritative interpreter of the Scriptures was church tradition, the pronouncements of the fathers, and the authoritative formulations of the magis-

trast, accepted what Blackwell calls the *de dicto* version of biblical hermeneutics. The great Jesuit apologist maintained that if something were said in Scripture it was, by that fact, true and a matter of faith. So the Incarnation was true and a matter of faith just as the fact that Abraham had two sons is a matter of faith.

As Blackwell notes, had Galileo (or anybody!) a concept of "paradigm" or "model"

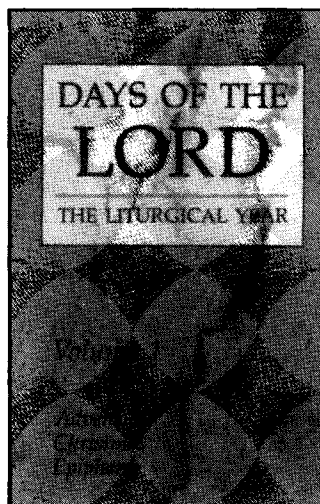
he might have been home free but he, true to his Aristotelian background, also sought for absolute truth and, in the field of biblical interpretation, at a time when the issue was of crucial importance, was no match for the authority of Bellarmine.

Galileo was right and Bellarmine was wrong. This judgment, from the sweet vantage point of history, was of small comfort to Galileo but it is a cautionary tale for us

Galileo, Bellarmine, and the Bible by
Richard J. Blackwell, University of Notre
Dame Press, \$29.95, 291 pp.

terium widely understood. The alternative was a welter of private interpretation/conflict, a situation that Catholic apologists gleefully noted in the Reformed movements of their day. How then was Galileo to account for the fact that the entire patristic and medieval tradition accepted the geocentric model of the universe? Galileo's answer was that they had never explicitly considered the question but assumed this picture of the cosmos and simply used the ordinary language of the day (we still speak of the "sun rising"). Bellarmine, by con-

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today. Blackwell's book should be of interest to every theologian. He makes us further in his debt by appending a generous (nearly one-hundred-page) selection of documents pertinent to the debate as they impinge on the question of biblical truth and scientific observation.

Over the past years I have reviewed a number of books on Luther as readers become the beneficiary of a spate of continental scholarship, translated into English, published on the occasion of the five-hundredth anniversary of Luther's birth in 1983. Brendler's biography is of particular interest because it was written by a historian from East Germany before the collapse of the German Democratic Republic. Brendler wrote against the Marxist conventional wisdom that Luther was a reactionary (the Marxist hero was, of course, Thomas Muntzer who identified himself with the Peasant Revolt) who sided with the princes, and not the proletariat, in the

tumults of the early sixteenth century. This biography takes its inspiration from Engels who saw Luther as the catalytic agent that transformed medieval feudal society by his revolt against Rome and it is from that platform that he attempts a more sympathetic picture of the reformer.

Martin Luther: Theology & Revolution,
by Gerhard Brendler Oxford University
Press, \$29.95, 383 pp.

The rehabilitation of Luther in the context of Marxist scholarship is the background of this biography but that family quarrel is not persistently insisted upon nor is it intrusive in the book. It should not surprise us, however, that Luther is portrayed preeminently in terms of German culture. In fact, while it is not as penetrating as Oberman or as thorough as Brecht (two biographies recently noted in this column), it is eminently readable, very good in terms of social history, and demonstrative of the fact that no final biography of this titanic figure will ever be written. It was a relief to me that the Marxist brush was laid gently on this portrait. Far more irritating was the large number of printed errata (Oxford books are usually free of this sort of thing) in the text; the most humorous one involved Tetzel's famous jingle to encourage people to contribute to the building of the basilica of Saint Peter. Instead of a "coin" clinking into the coffer, this text has "corn."

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 562)

Ravitch's book *The Catholic Church and the French Nation* [July 12], which I have only now seen. I am French, and a Parisian; also a Catholic who loves the church of Jesus Christ as a mystery, and not as a club, or a political party, or any human institution. I was surprised and shocked by the final two paragraphs of the review, which allege that many bishops and clergy, led by the cardinal archbishop of Paris, Jean-Marie Lustiger, are "lashing out against and suppressing" many forms of Catholic action.

To me it seems a total misunderstanding of the situation. At the time of Vatican II there occurred also our 1968 students' revolution. The two events together brought as a consequence a long period of "over-liberalism" in the church, and this in its turn was responsible for the Lefebvre schism.

What is taking place now, from my point of view, is a true renewal of the church: deeply faithful to the council and at the same time more respectful of tradition and its true values. Our bishops are truly "united in love," and more human than they ever were. Cardinal Lustiger is a valiant apostle and in Paris the church is very much alive.

I would like to know which forms of Catholic action are being "lashed out against" by the hierarchy. In any case, I believe these paragraphs of the review show a lack of respect for the apostolic labor of the church in France.

(MRS.) CLAUDE N. BREYDERT

The reviewer replies:

Cardinal Lustiger's creation of a parallel seminary is one major example (among many others, major and minor) of the undermining of liberal Catholic institutions found objectionable by propapal forces in the current French episcopacy. His Maison Saint-Augustin is intended to rival, and if possible destroy, the traditional archdiocesan seminaries, Les Carmes and Issy-les-Moulineaux, which have been badly hobbled as a result.

The cardinal has never hidden his contempt for Catholic Action. His attitude is captured well in the advice he gave to Father Alain de La Morandais when he transferred him from the 14th arrondissement to the 16th. The 16th, he said, "is a rotten area, it's been wrecked by Action Catholique. Start again from scratch."

Although the Cardinal has never conceded that he played a role in it, the sudden dismissal of the liberal Jesuit Paul Valadier from the editorship of *Etudes* two years ago was viewed by nearly every informed observer of the French Catholic scene as an action taken to placate the irate archbishop. Valadier was well known as one of Lustiger's most intelligent critics.

Mrs. Breydert's assertion that "[o]ur bishops are really 'united in love' would

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come as news to Mgr. Gaillot, bishop of Evreux, who has been hounded and castigated (and red-baited) for his brave espousal of positions uncongenial to Rome; e.g., favoring the ordination of married men, the use of contraceptive devices, etc. His vilification by propapal forces has done anything but unite the French bishops in love.

Most troubling for me personally is Mrs. Breydert's questioning of my love and respect for the (French) church just because

she disagrees with my political opinions. I regret to say that her doing so is unpleasantly characteristic of the ultramontane forces in France at this time, who tend to question the good faith of their critics. For the record, I feel great love for the French church, into whose bosom I converted to Christianity (in 1971, at age twenty-six). As for the cardinal-archbishop of Paris, I have gone on record (in these pages, April 25, 1986) saying that Jean-Marie Lustiger is one of the most exciting, intelligent, passionate, and interesting forces in the church today. I still think so. But I disagree with

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some of his political stands. No big deal. I wouldn't for a second deny that what unites us (including Mrs. Breydert) is far greater than what separates us. That, I'd have thought, goes without saying.

STEVEN ENGLUND

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Robert Bellah on Market Totalitarianism

According to the Chicago school of economics, human beings are exclusively self-interest maximizers and the primary measure of self-interest is money. This school's bizarre ideas have a powerful sway over government. Ann Swidler, when doing interviews for our new book, *The Good Society* (Knopf), talked to an expert at the Environmental Protection Agency about how it figures trade-offs in human lives saved versus the costs of safety devices that would save them. Ann suggested, "Some people believe human life is priceless." The government expert replied, "We have no data on that."

A recent poll showed that the thing affluent Americans can least do without is their microwave oven. An increasing number of American families never has a meal together. One by one, family members drift into the kitchen and stick something in the microwave (this is grazing rather than having a meal). Then it's, "So long, I gotta go." What happens to the family when its colonization by the economy reaches this extent?

According to the market model, higher education is just a means to success, not a way of challenging students to think more deeply about themselves and the world.

I could go on giving examples, but the great irony is that the economic conception of life turns out to be destructive of our economy! Community is a stronger basis for an effective economy than self-interest — as Japan reveals.

There is a market totalitarianism that paral-

els state totalitarianism; both eat up the substance of society. We need to limit market forces when they threaten to dominate our lives; we must withstand consumerism and shallow individualism. It is here that all institutions that embody moral standards are important, the church chief among them. The church has a long history of being the rallying ground for moral advances. We need to learn from what our sister churches in eastern Europe have done to provide space to question a given order and imagine new alternatives.

— adapted from the NEW OXFORD REVIEW

These comments from Robert Bellah say much about the purpose of the NEW OXFORD REVIEW. Edited by lay Catholics, the REVIEW is an ecumenical monthly magazine exploring the moral and spiritual bases of a good society, and probing the significant puzzles in life: evil, generosity, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

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